

## PROJECT ABSTRACT

Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

Title: THE NURTURING OF NEW CONVERTS THROUGH PROPHETIC STUDIES  
IN THE NEW TAFO DISTRICT OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

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Keeping new converts and the youths in the church is one of the headaches church leaders of today are struggling with church growth. Most of these teachers are putting in their maximum effort in order to curtail this, but have always been at the losing end. Many scholars of church growth have written extensively on the subject of nurturing, however, their write ups have yielded very little. The New Tafo District of Seventh-day Adventists in the Manhya Constituency is not left out of this predicament, because many that are baptized in to the church through the numerous forms of evangelism – from personal evangelism to major campaigns, from Sabbath school units to small groups, the bane still continues unresolved.

Retrospectively, it would be of much importance, if we can turn the clock and analyze methods by which our fathers of old did to keep the membership at high percentages, which has helped kept church growth in Adventism soaring high. One of the

methods, which I think may still be effective is nurturing new converts and the youths through prophetic studies. And this is what all this research wants to achieve.

This research will be achieved through a missiological form, where qualitative and quantitative methods would be employed to accomplish the purpose of the research. Interview guides in the form of questionnaires were used through the study group. Throughout the research, it was found out from the programme design that, if new converts, the youths, and even the old members would be established and strengthened firmly in the church through prophetic studies. Looking at the outcome of the programme design, about 93% of the people converted are still in the churches unswervingly. As the prophetic school is still in session, I do hope that it would keep on strengthening the new converts and the youths in good conditions to defend the church in prophetic studies and also be ready to nurture others as they have been nurtured.

Adventist University of Africa

School of Postgraduate Studies

THE NURTURING OF NEW CONVERTS THROUGH  
PROPHETIC STUDIES IN THE NEW TAFO DISTRICT OF SEVENTH-DAY  
ADVENTIST CHURCH

A project

presented in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology

by

Akwasi Boateng

June 2015




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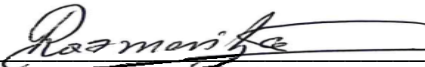
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Dedicated to the New Tafo District, the South Central Ghana

Conference and the Seventh-day Adventists

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CGC	Central Ghana Conference
EGC	East Ghana Conference
GUC	Ghana Union Conference
MGC	Mid-West Ghana Conference
MSGAU	Mid-South Ghana Administration Unit
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NGM	North Ghana Mission
NPP	New Patriotic Party
NTD	New Tafo District
SCGC	South Central Ghana Conference
SGC	South Ghana Conference
SWGK	South West Ghana Conference

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is an evangelical church, being commissioned to herald the Parousia [the Second Coming] of Christ with all intensity. The mission of the Adventist Church is “to proclaim to all peoples the everlasting gospel in the context of the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14:6-12, leading them to accept Jesus as personal Savior and to unite with His church, and nurturing them in preparation for His soon return.”<sup>1</sup>

The members of the Church are proclaiming the gospel and through the power of the Holy Spirit, are converting new converts for the Parousia, but keeping the new converts has become a mountainous task in some churches. In the past, the teaching programme for the new converts through a marathon of biblical prophecies and doctrines had not been productive, due to the idea of adding new converts to old members. Grouping new converts for some months may help nurture them to be established firmly in the church. Jesus asserted in the Gospel according to Matthew 9:16, 17 that, “No one puts a piece of new cloth onto an old garment . . . nor do men put new wine into old wineskins; else the wineskins burst, and the wine runs out, and the wineskins perish. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved together.”<sup>2</sup> The context of the passage above was Jesus and His disciples eating with tax collectors and sinners and the Pharisees and the disciples of John the

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<sup>1</sup>*Working Policy ed. 2012-2013, Seventh-day Adventists, West-Central Africa Division, Advent Press.*

<sup>2</sup>*Bible, King James Version.* It will also be used for all Scriptural texts, both Old and New Testaments, which will be used in this research work.

Baptist came questioning Him, why He and His disciples were not fasting as John and his disciples did?. Jesus expounded to them that while the bridegroom is still with them, then there is no need to mourn (fast), but rather to enjoy and be happy with Him, however, if He is taken away, then they can mourn (fast). In saying this He went on to illustrate with old and new wineskins to demonstrate His new way of doing things not as the old Judaism's way of doing things. Theologically, new converts need to have a new and separate way of teaching them to become ablest with the teachings (doctrines and prophecies) of the church, so as to establish them firmly in the church. Mixing the two together straight from baptism has not helped the church, however giving them a separate class like the Pastor's class, or after baptism class would be of greater help. The syndrome of not nurturing new converts may had brought a lot of harm to the worldwide Church than good, and the New Tafo District (NTD) in the South Central Ghana Conference (SCGC) is not exempted from the situation.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in the New Tafo District in the South Central Ghana Conference has been baptizing people into the Church through the evangelisms conducted periodically, but two-thirds, which is 67%, of these new converts leaves the church before they are even recognized. The following statistical report in Table 1 below shows the rate at which new converts leave the district from 2010 – 2012 (2<sup>nd</sup> quarter):

*Table 1. Statistical Report of New Tafo District from 2010 – 2012 (2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter)*

Years at beginning	Membership	Baptisms granted	Letters	Deaths Apostasy	Missing/ at end	Membership
2010	2874	95	5	3	24	(58) 2932
2011	2932	75	0	4	23	(48) 2980
2012(2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr.)	2980	66	0	3	21	(42) 3022

The nurturing of new converts has really become a problem to the church at large and needs to be tackled with all seriousness. There have been proposals for nurturing new converts. Unfortunately, there are not many on using a nurturing programme that would promote the essence of the Adventist faith in the prophetic studies. This situation that the Adventist Church finds itself has stimulated this research.

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

This study sets the hypothesis that, prophetic studies, if used correctly, extensively and frequently, will help establish new converts in an authentic Adventist faith and also make them capable of nurturing others in the church. It will not only help these new converts, but in return revive the youths and the old members in the church.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This research intends to develop a program and strategize to enhance the nurturing of new converts who emanate from evangelistic programmes, and also establishing the new converts in the church, through a comprehensive study of biblical prophecies for the seven churches in the New Tafo District and other districts later. Ensuring the nurturing of these new converts will also help the youths and the old members of the church, in reminding them of the prophecies they have studied long time ago.

## **Justification of the Study**

This work is justified since it will first establish new converts in the Adventist church. This will equip and establish in their minds the call and essence of the existence of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as the biblical Remnant Church. Not only the new converts would benefit, but the older members in other Adventist churches in the district will also be become knowledgeable in biblical prophecies and doctrinal issues, setting a revival in the district in general. Lastly, evangelism will be enhanced and expenditure in evangelism will be productive to pastors, conference and the scholarship.

## **Delimitations**

This research will be confined to the nurturing of new converts in the Seventh - day Adventist church. The geographical space of the research will cover the New Tafo District of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, comprising churches like the New Tafo, Aboabo, Sepe Timpom, Asokore Mampong, Tafo Nhyiaeso, Asabi and Boaban. All these churches are found in the Manhyia Constituency in the Ashanti Region. Elders of these churches will be allowed to distribute questionnaires.

## **Limitations**

The sample size and sampling may encounter some difficulties since uniformity of the respondents may not be obtained. Another limitation that may occur is the rate of literacy of the respondents.

## **Methodology**

Both quantitative and qualitative are employed to achieve the purpose for which this research is conducted. The component of this methodology will be identified generally by the chapters. Apart from the introduction, the research is divided into

four. The second chapter is the theoretical foundation of this study, which is a review of the use of biblical prophecy in nurturing of God's people through the Patriarchal, Mosaic/Exodus, and the pre-exilic, exilic, post exile eras. In this chapter, an in-depth study of the Acts of the Apostles and some of the Pauline writings will also be carried out to determine the biblical keys to nurturing new converts. Biblical study method (close reading, historical-grammatical exegesis, etc.) will also be used in this chapter.

In chapter 3, the researcher does a bibliographical study in order to identify the group of new converts who normally leave the church after a short stay. Qualitative research like documentary review, interviews, and personal observation are used to ascertain whether lack of nurturing through studies of biblical prophecy is indeed the cause why new converts leave the church whilst quantitatively, surveys are done in the churches to evaluate the in-depth study of the topic and its relevance in nurturing new converts. The researcher does a documentary review to rate why new converts leave the church and to ascertain whether a programme through studies of biblical prophecy could maintain the members in the church.

The researcher interviewed personal ministries leaders, elders, pastors, officers in the church and the new converts to know why and how they leave the church, which they have accepted and covenanted through baptism. In chapter 4, the researcher designed topics in biblical prophecies and implemented between three to six months observational period, and evaluate the methodologies employed in the study to identify which of the stipulated periods will be maintained. Qualitative study was applied to ascertain whether or not, nurturing using biblical prophecies had an impact on the new converts. The researcher, after observing the impact of teaching biblical prophecies for four weeks, on the new converts, verifies the hypothesis of the research.



## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

#### **Biblical Perspective of Nurturing**

This chapter deals with the biblical perspectives of nurturing through studies of biblical prophecies, as found in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. The second major section of this chapter delves into E. G. White's writings<sup>1</sup> on nurturing through studies of biblical prophecies. The third section of this chapter explores other scholars on studies of biblical prophecies.

#### **Nurturing in the Old Testament**

Nurturing in the Old Testament gives us the basis of nurturing for the entire human race. In this section, the researcher deals with nurturing as seen in the Antediluvian Patriarch era, the Pre-Exilic era, and the Post-Exilic era. How each of the eras used nurturing to bring their children in the way of the Lord.

**Nurturing in the Antediluvian Era.** The Old Testament has a number of epochs that show that, in the absence of an organized church, the patriarchs before and after the deluge, since there was no church then, were able to nurture their children in the way of the Lord through family lines. The word 'nurturing' is not precisely found in the Old Testament, but has similarities with some words like training, rearing, teach and many others in the Scripture. As Exodus 18: 20 says "And thou shalt teach them

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<sup>1</sup> E. G. White was a Seventh-day Adventist who lived in the early stages of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and wrote extensively as a result of her encounter with God. She lived from 1827-1915.

ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.” The book of Proverb also adds “train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.” (22: 6). Staurt Berg Flexner defined nurturing as “to feed and protect; e.g. nurturing one’s offspring or to support and encourage, as during the period of training or development or to bring up; train; educate or rearing, upbringing, training education or the like”<sup>2</sup>

This section examines four Old Testament passages relevant to nurturing of new converts through studies of prophecies. The first passage which is found in Gen. 3:15, describes the first couple just fallen into sin. Ahead of them laid a history of tragedy, suffering and death. God decided the best way to sustain Adam and Eve and the rest of humanity through a prophetic promise. A deliverer will come to crush the serpent which led them into sin (Gen. 3:15) and thus restore their relationship with Him. Adam and Eve were to study this prophecy as a form of support and encouragement and waited patiently for the fulfillment of that prophetic promise as found in Gen. 3:15. The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary (SDABC) asserts that this judgment, expressed in prophetic language, has ever been understood by the Christian church as a prediction of the coming of the Deliverer,<sup>3</sup> but the deliverer, also called the seed is Christ,<sup>4</sup> and continues that the prophecy is also true literally.<sup>5</sup> Matthew Henry states that “a gracious promise is here made of Christ, as the deliverer of fallen

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<sup>2</sup> Staurt Berg Flexner, *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language* 2ed. Unbridged.

<sup>3</sup> F. D. Nichol. *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Volume 1*. Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978; 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Nichol

<sup>5</sup> Nichol

man from the power of Satan”<sup>6</sup> and maintains that “by the promised seed who shall descend from the woman as 1 Tim. 2:15”<sup>7</sup>. The promised seed was really Christ, and through Him only will this prophetic promise be fulfilled. When Cain was born, they thought the deliverer had been born to them, but he was not the promised deliverer (Gen. 4:2). However, on the coming deliverer, Adam and Eve trained and nurtured their children how they should use sacrifices to communicate with the Lord. J. M. Gibson summarized in *the Biblical Illustrator* that, Jesus is the seed of the woman, who had conquered the devil on our behalf, however, we as children of the seed, need also to conquer the devil and his evil men through His strength.<sup>8</sup>

The tunics of skin for covering their nakedness (Gen. 3:21) were also a form of nurturing through prophecy. God taught them that, it is always good to cover human sinful nakedness. Prophetically, God was teaching that, they cannot cover their sins through their own merits but only through the merits of Christ, as Isaiah had said our righteousness is like a filthy rag (Isa.64:6). All that God did for Adam and Eve, after they have sinned, was a form of nurturing, to turn them to the way of the Lord (Gen. 18:19). The way of the Lord, as seen here, means being obedient to God in the things He has commanded us. However, concerning the tunics of skin as covering over their nakedness, E. G. White said that “God provided them with more durable clothing, suitable for the hard labor that lay ahead and as protection against the extremes of heat and cold that followed the fall.”<sup>9</sup> The Bible Exposition Commentary expounded that, “God's response to Adam and Eve's faith was to remove their flimsy man-made

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<sup>6</sup>Matthew Henry, *Bible Works vol. 7*

<sup>7</sup> Matthew Henry, *Bible Works 7*

<sup>8</sup>Joseph S. Exell, *Biblical Illustrator*, Ages Software, Inc. and Biblesoft, Inc. 2002, 2003, 2006.

<sup>9</sup>F. D. Nichol, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Volume 1*. Review and Herald Publishing Association. 1978; 2002.

garments and clothe them with acceptable garments that He Himself provided (Isa 61:10).<sup>10</sup> Commenting on this, Keil & Delitzsch also opined that “the man’s first clothing was the work of God, who gave the necessary directions and ability”<sup>11</sup> They continued that, “this act of God laid the foundation of sacrifices.”<sup>12</sup> This is in harmony with the general biblical concept of grace: humans cannot obtain salvation through their own merits or righteousness, but through the merits and righteousness of Christ.

The sacrifice of the lamb, known to the antediluvians, appears to have been not only a sacrificial rite, but a prophetic nurturing. The second passage deals with the sacrifice of Cain and Abel (Gen. 4:1-10) and shows that the people before the deluge also were taught by the parents about the first coming of Christ as a sacrificial Lamb of God. As the book of Hebrews says “without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin (Hebrews. 9:22), it was envisaged that Abel was obedient to what he was taught, but Cain was not, and that resulted in his offering, being rejected by God. If they were not taught the way of giving an acceptable offering, God would not have told him, “If you did well, will you not be accepted (Gen. 4:7, 8), meaning they were well educated by their parents concerning sacrifices. Regarding sacrifices, as presented by Cain and Abel, the Teacher Commentary states that “it is likely the boys were so instructed by their parents or by God”, as to how sacrifice should be done.<sup>13</sup> This means that their children were taught the way of the Lord and were conversant with the prophecies of God concerning the Messiah, who was to come as their Sacrificial Lamb.

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<sup>10</sup>Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*: Old Testament 2001-2004

<sup>11</sup>Keil and Delitzsch *Commentary on the Old Testament*: New Updated Edition, Electronic Database by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1996.

<sup>12</sup>Keil and Delitzsch

<sup>13</sup>*The Teacher's Commentary*. Chariot Victor Publishing, 1987.

The third passage deals with Enoch and attests that, he understood prophecies, and that might have prompted him to prophesy about the Second Coming of Christ with His angels to punish the wicked as Jude reported in his book, verses 14,15 that

And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

This shows that, through Enoch's reliance and understanding of prophecies, he walked with God and was able to live a godly life, from which God took him away (Gen. 5:18-24). A. J. Morris in the *Bible Illustrator* puts it that Enoch's walk with the Lord meant that, his religion was life, an active life<sup>14</sup> that pleased God to the extent that he took him and he did not see death. This was a proof that Enoch lived in expectancy of the coming of Christ, in which judgment would be meted out to the wicked.

In the fourth passage, God prophesied through Noah, and Noah taught his children too to accept and none of them was lost in flood. All the children regarded the prophetic message as direct from God and that may have had impact on their obedience. They went into the ark as the Lord had commanded, because of their upbringing. (Gen. 7:13).

**Nurturing in the Patriarchal Era.** Scripture makes it plain in the life of the greatest patriarch ever lived. He was the greatest in that, God, after calling him, changed his name from Abram to Abraham, meaning the father of many nations (Gen. 17:4, 5). God called Abraham from his kindred to go the land that He will show him, wherein he would receive God's blessings (Gen. 12: 1-5). One of God's

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<sup>14</sup>The *Bible Illustrator*, Ages Software, Inc. and Biblesoft, Inc., 2002, 2003, 2006.

commendations to Abraham was that he would nurture his children in the way of the Lord: “For I have known him (Abraham), in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice . . .” (Gen. 18:19). The sacrifice of Isaac also shows that Abraham trained Isaac to trust God’s providence, such as the prophecy about the coming of the Lamb of God, who would be sacrificed as the redeemer of the mankind.

The promise of the land of Canaan was prophetic in nature, but Abraham appeared to have taught his children to trust God’s promises and prophecies. God used prophecy to guide Abraham and his descendants in the unknown century’s ahead, (Gen. 12:1-3) and Abraham did his best to pass on this prophetic knowledge to his posterity. The Lord appeared to Isaac in Gerar that, “and said, Go not down into Egypt, dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: . . . I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father” (Gen. 26:1-4). Isaac, after planning to send Jacob to his uncle Laban, blessed him that, “God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham” (Gen. 28:3, 4). The Lord God himself repeated the promise He gave to Abraham and Isaac to Jacob also that,

I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the and whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of(Gen. 28:13-15).

Joseph was reared into these prophecies and arranged his life to that effect.

Joseph, from the teachings he received from his father, Israel (Jacob), believed that God of their fathers will definitely let His prophecies come to pass, hence bidding his brothers to take his bones to the Promised Land (Gen. 50:24, 25).

Throughout the patriarchal era, prophecies and promises made by God to His people and, they also nurturing their children, through these prophecies and promises, played a major part in the spiritual, social, economic, and political activities of the patriarchs until the nation called Israel came into existence, after the sojourn of Israel (Jacob) and his children in the land of Egypt.

**Nurturing in the Pre-Exilic Era.** Nurturing in the pre-exilic Israel was of the highest magnitude, because it was done in a well-knitted manner consisting of the following elements: the nation, tribes, and the nucleus family. As means of nurturing, the Israelites used biblical doctrines, stories, proverbs, and prophecies. However, the fulfilled prophecies concerning the acquiring of the land of Canaan, which had been promised to Abraham and his descendants and the coming seed in Gen. 3:15 had a major role.

Moses left the Israelites with an explicit prophecy that would guide their lives into the expectation of the Messiah in the Promised Land. In Deuteronomy 18:18 he prophesied that “God will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him” Before his death and the entrance of the Israelites into Canaan, Moses reminded the Israelites the commands of God, “teach them (His commandments) diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when thou walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up. And you shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as

frontlets between your eyes” (Deut.6:5-8). According to *Teacher’s Commentary*, the texts have threefold meaning. First, we should let God’s word be part of our live to reshape our attitudes and values. Second, if really God’s words are rooted in us, we would share with those we love especially nurturing our children in the way of the Lord. The third point is that it will be the daily guide to our life.<sup>15</sup>*The Bible Knowledge Commentary of the Old Testament* adds that, the commands to tie them and write them were probably emphasizing symbolically the need for the continual teaching of the Law.<sup>16</sup>

The commandments Moses included prophecies as well. All of this body of teachings was given to indoctrinate the children of Israel into the way of the Lord. The Israelites taught and gave this hope to their children and their children’s children.

The sanctuary constructed by Moses according to the heavenly pattern [Exo. 25:8] was also prophetic in nature, pointing to the Coming Messiah, who was coming to dwell among His people and the services he was to render to His people as the sacrificial Lamb of God (Heb. 9:28). The children of Israel were taught these prophecies in building their characters in the way of the Lord.

The best that happened to the Israelites during the Pre-Exilic Era was the period in which they settled finally in the Promised Land. In the Promised Land, three nurturing instruments of God were used in their quest to know the way of the Lord. First, God first used prophets as communicators of His truths to His people. Prophecies were made by them as they were revealed by God to them. According to Martin Noth, the Hebrew prophetic movement appears to have begun during the early years of the occupancy of Canaan<sup>17</sup>. Prophet Amos explains in his book that, “surely

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<sup>15</sup>*The Teacher’s Commentary* Deuteronomy, Chariot Victor Publishing 1987.

<sup>16</sup>*Bible Knowledge Commentary/Old Testament*, Cook Communications Ministries, 2000.



the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he reveals His secret unto His servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7).

Second, Samuel established the School of the Prophets to teach and nurture the children of Israel, the way of the Lord and prophecies. These were the company of prophets, whom Saul met when walking with Samuel, to Gilgal. The Spirit of God came upon Saul, and he started prophesying, as it was said that, is Saul also among the prophets? (1 Sam. 10:10, 11). This School of Prophets was there to preserve the knowledge of God among His people, to keep the prophecies that God has made to His people and to teach as recorded in 2 Chronicles 17:9 that, “they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.”

The kings of Israel, because of their trust in the prophecies and the promises of God, trusted fully in Him and most of them lived to the dictates of God. David in his book, the Psalms wrote that, “Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.” (Psa. 50:3). Here it was seen that, what they were taught as youth, was what made King David to say this. And it shows he already had knowledge about the Day of the Lord’s coming.

King Solomon, who was the son of David and also the writer of the Book of Ecclesiastics said that “Rejoice, O young man, in your youth; and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth, and walk in the ways of your heart, and in the sight of your eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring you into judgment. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His Commandments: for this is the whole duty of man (Eccl. 9:14; 12:12-14). From the

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<sup>17</sup>Martin Noth, "History and the Word of God in the Old Testament," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, XXXII (1949-50).

contents of the Book of Proverbs, it is acknowledged that, the writer taught much about keeping the commandments of God and also obeying the instructions of our parents and the aged.

Later the School of Prophets, in the time of Elijah, was mainly used to nurture and train the children of Israel the way of the Lord. This was the school where Elisha was trained before he was picked by Elijah, plowing on his father's farm. The lives of both ordinary and leading Israelites were impacted significantly by prophecies. Isaiah wrote extensively on prophecies especially concerning judgments that will come upon nations that rose against Israel.

There were a significant number of prophecies against nations that subjected Israel to captivity like the Assyrians, Babylonians, Tyre, Sidon and many others. Jeremiah also prophesied on the 70 years captivity in Babylon, in which God promised to visit them after the 70 years. (Jer. 29:10). The Prophet Ezekiel wrote lengthily on visions and revelations given him by God to the people of his time. Prophet Daniel, referring to the prophecies of Jeremiah, concerning the 70 years captivity, proved that he guided his life and spirituality by studying the prophecies concerning his times (Dan. 9:2). These prophecies had tremendous effects on the lives of the children of the Israelites though some went astray but the held fast to the prophecies and were obedient totally to all his biddings. After the exile, did the Israelites' leaders continue studying in the way of the Lord?

**Nurturing in the Post Exilic Era.** In this section, the researcher intends to look at how both non-Israelites kings and some prominent Israelites who were diligent students of prophecies helped in the fulfillment and also serve as reminders of the prophecies. When the exile was coming to an end, Media-Persian kings, Cyrus,

Darius and Artaxerxes made decrees for the return of Israel to rebuild their land as prophesied by Jeremiah,

Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. (Ezra 1:1-3; 6:3, 14, 15).

And the priests taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.

However, through the pleadings of Ezra, Nehemiah and others, as seen in their books respectively, the last batch of the captives returned to Jerusalem to finish rebuilding the temple and the walls of the city. When they (the first batch) came with Ezra, who was their priest and scribe, they chanced on the Laws of God and the laws of Moses, given by God. After reading to the peoples' hearing and they continued what the priest had been doing – teaching the people in their homes. Ezra told the priest to go and teach the people in their homes the Laws of God. The Scripture says that, “For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the LORD, and to do it and to teach His statutes and judgments” (Ezra 7:10).

Nehemiah (2:2-5) also opined to King Artaxerxes about requesting opportunity to build the cities of his fathers which are lying waste, bringing into retrospect, prophecies concerning the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its walls as prophesied through Angel Gabriel in the book of Daniel chapter 9:24-29. King Artaxerxes and Nehemiah worked feverishly to make these prophecies come to their fulfillment. There were other minor prophets who talked extensively about prophecies. For instance, Hosea, who was asked by God to go and marry a prostitute called Gomer (Hosea 1:2; 3:1),

and Amos, who was a shepherd at Tekoa and prophesied during the days of King Uzziah, Jeroboam (Amos 1:1), and Joel who preached concerning the day of the Lord to Judah, Israel and the surrounding nations to teach them the way of the Lord and how to walk uprightly before God and also prophesied about outpouring of the Spirit of God in the last days ( Joel 2:1, 2; 2:28-32).

Zechariah stressed the continuing concern of the Lord for His people and the final vindication of the Jewish hope. Messiah would come, and all the families of the earth would appear at Jerusalem to worship Him (Zech. 14:16).<sup>18</sup> He again prophesied about the scars, the Messiah will sustain, “And one shall say unto him, what are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.” Zechariah 13:6. Malachi prophesied about the utter destruction God will bring on those who did wickedly (Mal. 4:2) and coming of Elijah before the dreadful day of the Lord (Mal. 4:4-6) getting to the closing stages of this world’s history.

All the Major and Minor Prophets were students of prophecy, in that, they accurately prophesied and taught their congregations about what God has revealed to them. Paul Enns said that, the books of these prophets presented a developing concept of God’s future dealing with Israel and the world. They provided an expanded picture of Messiah’s work in His first and second advents<sup>19</sup>. So in the post exilic period the people of Israel received instructions from the scribes and the priests concerning the laws of God, prophecies, and oracles, imparting the way of the Lord to the people. This went on continuously, even in Jesus’ time.

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<sup>18</sup>*The Teacher's Commentary*. Chariot Victor Publishing, 1987.

<sup>19</sup> Paul P. Enns. *The Moody Handbook of Theology*. Moody Press, 1989.

## **Nurturing in the New Testament**

This section intends to bring home the way different sects in the annals of the Jewish nation, tried to attract disciples through nurturing from other teachings and studies in prophecies. Also, nurturing in Jesus' Ministry and nurturing in the apostolic times are described.

The major Jewish sects during the times of Jesus were the Zealots, the Pharisees, the Essenes, the Sadducees, and the Herodians<sup>20</sup>. All these sects were having disciples they were nurturing. Some of these sects were having groups, with their leaders being called *Rabbis*, meaning "teachers," who were teaching, in a way, mentoring their followers to live like them and believe what they believe. This title was dominant in the Pharisees, but there was a time it was addressed to Jesus (Matt 23:7, 8; John 1:38, 49). An example of such groups was seen when John the Baptist started his work, some disciples followed him (Matt. 11:2). It was the order of the day to have a teacher you are studying from. It was also seen when Herod the king of Judaea, heard of a king born to the Jews, he quickly summoned the scribes to find out where the king would be born. Because the scribes had studied the prophecies, they were able to tell him where the child would be born (Matt. 2:1-4). This shows that they were nurtured by prophetic teaching, and were also guided by it to know the signs of the times.

**Nurturing in Jesus' Ministry.** When Jesus came to the earth, He chose twelve people to be His disciples. He did not base His selection on any criteria, but those He envisaged, could be His disciples and do the work, the Father has given Him to do. He selected them and made plans to train and nurture them to be fit for the work before them. He granted them the privilege to study under His feet as did all the rabbis to their disciples. However, the disciples of Christ were up to the task, in that the people

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<sup>20</sup> D. S. Russell. *Between the Testaments*, The King James Version, Fortress Press. 1965.

in the apostles' time were able to confess that "When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13).

Throughout the three and half years at the feet of Jesus, the disciples were trained and nurtured to take the mantle from where Jesus would stop. The disciples were nurtured and taught to know the prophecies concerning the Second Coming of Christ. In Matthew 24, Christ took His time to open clearly to the minds of the disciples regarding the signs that will precede His Coming. After telling them about the pestilence, famine, earthquake and many others, He drew their attention to the finishing of the gospel work (Matt. 24:14), as one of the greatest signs showing how near His Coming is at hand. In order to instill the studies of prophecies in them in the discourse, Christ made mention of the book of Daniel, regarding the abomination of desolation, spoken of by the Prophet Daniel, stands in the holy place, which reads, let him understand (Matt. 24:15). Here, it is seen that Jesus Christ is drawing the minds of the disciples to a prophecy in the book of Daniel. This informs us that the disciples may be students of prophecy who by one way or the other have been studying the prophecies, hence Christ reminding them of that prophecy. Commenting on this, SDA Bible Commentary suggested that, Christ using the book of Daniel brought to His hearers that Daniel was a man of history and a prophet of God<sup>21</sup>. From this, one can deduce that Jesus had a perfect knowledge of prophecies.

Again, in Matt. 24:45 Christ told His hearers that, "who then is a faithful and wise servant that his lord makes him ruler over his household to give them meat [food] in due season?" Jesus Christ was emphasizing on the essence of nurturing for those that are placed under our supervision. He drove home that such a servant, if he did

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<sup>21</sup> Nicole Francis, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1953.

what his lord expected from him will be rewarded, but if the servant thinks that his lord has delayed and starts messing up with drunkards and smite his co-servants, he will be punished. So nurturing new converts and the youth in all spheres of teachings including prophecies is one of the expectations the Lord is looking from us.

The Disciples of Christ were trained and nurtured on prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple and how they ought to do when such a calamity strikes (Matt. 24:20). In 70 AD, when the temple of Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, the disciples living then, were able to flee from Jerusalem, without been part of the death toll (DA p. 630.3)<sup>22</sup>. Jesus Christ, after resurrecting from the dead, commanded His disciples that they should go into all the world and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching all that He has commanded them and He is with them always to the end of the world (Matt. 28:19-20). Here Jesus used the word teaching, by commanding the disciples not to leave those that have been baptized to their fate, but to teach them all that He has taught them.

Christ again drew Peter's attention to caring for His sheep and lamb, by asking him if he really loves Him three times (John 21:19-21). The Disciples of Christ were trained

and nurtured to care for the new group of believers who will accept the gospel of Christ.

They were well prepared enough to take care of the infant Church established by Jesus Christ, and that gave birth to the apostolic church.

**Nurturing in the Apostolic Era.** The Apostolic era was one of the eras that nurturing took place. All the while, nurturing had been occurring in families and

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<sup>22</sup> E. G. White, *The Desire of Ages*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Publishing Association

tribes, but in the apostolic era, it mostly occurred in churches commonly called synagogues, and sometimes in households. Apostles after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Peter stood up and made reference to the Book of Joel (2:28-32) depicting that they were conversant with prophecies. After his preaching, as many as three thousand souls accepted the gospel and were baptized into the church. As soon as they were baptized nurturing started. The Bible says “they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42).

Here the apostles continued teaching and nurturing the new converts in the doctrines that Jesus Christ commanded them to teach those that would be baptized. Commenting on the text, Craig S. Keener says “early Christian fellowship undoubtedly centered more on intimate worship, sharing and learning the Scriptures than its modern Western counterpart tends to do”<sup>23</sup>. Warren V. Wiersbe also adds that, “the 3,000 new converts needed instruction in the Word and fellowship with God’s people if they were to grow and become effective witnesses. The early church did more than make converts; they also made disciples”.<sup>24</sup> These and others bring to mind that, the disciples may be students of prophecies.

### **E. G. White’s Perspective of Nurturing**

E. G. White, a co – founder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, in her writings sparsely used the word ‘nurturing’ in bringing up new converts into the stature of Christ laid for all Christians. However she used words like teaching, training and caring for new converts. By the definition, Staurt Berg Flexner puts nurturing as “to feed and protect; e.g. nurturing one’s offspring or to support and encourage, as during

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<sup>23</sup>Craig S. Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*. InterVarsity Press, 1993.

<sup>24</sup> Warren V. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. Chariot Victor Publishing and imprint of Cook Communication Ministries, 1989.



the period of training or development or to bring up; train; educate or rearing, upbringing, training education or the like”<sup>25</sup> And this definition goes with how E. G. White used it.

Nurturing as envisaged by E.G. White is the best way to keep members in the church and also to teach and train them for the services of spreading the gospel message to all the world, which is the supreme intent of God. In her thought, this should be the work of the Church throughout its existence Ellen G. White says that many people do not comprehend what the prophecies are saying about our world today and it is our responsibility to give them enlightenment in the prophecies.<sup>26</sup> She continues that let not the solemn scenes which prophecy has revealed, be left untouched.<sup>27</sup> From this it has been seen that we have a responsibility to work at, and if we do not study the prophecies as they have been revealed to us, then how can we warn the world of the impending crisis? This is why it is important to nurture new converts, the youth and even old members in the prophetic studies, so to make them ablest with the end time.

She quotes again in her book, *The Acts of the Apostle*,

“And Paul did not forget the churches thus established. The care of these churches rested on his mind as an ever-increasing burden. However, small a company might be, it was nevertheless the object of his constant solitude. He watched over the smaller churches tenderly, realizing that they were in need of special care in order that the members might be thoroughly established in the truth and taught to put forth earnest, unselfish efforts for those around them. When men of promise and ability were converted, as in the case of Timothy, Paul and Barnabas sought earnestly to show them the necessity of laboring in the vineyard. And when the apostles left for another, the faith of these men did not fail, but rather increased. They had been faithfully instructed in the way of the Lord, and had been taught how to labor unselfishly, earnestly, perseveringly, for

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<sup>25</sup> Staurt Berg Flexner, *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language* 2ed. Unbridged.

<sup>26</sup> E. G. White *Evangelism* Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid*

the salvation of their fellow men. This careful training of new converts was an important factor in the remarkable success that attended Paul and Barnabas as they preached the gospel in heathen lands.”<sup>28</sup>

One can deduce from here that, the best tool to be used in stabilizing new converts in the church and preparing them for service is through nurturing in general, however, as the researcher wants to establish, if it is done through prophetic studies, it may yield a lot. But this training among the youth and new converts should start in the home.

**Nurturing through Studies of Prophecies in the Home.** Nurturing through studies of prophecies can be started at home by parents to their children, because the bible has unanimously declared that, “train up a child the way he should go: and when he is old he will not depart from it” Prov. 22: 6. Commenting on this, T. Tillotson says that, the careful, prudent, and religious education of children hath for the most part a very good influence upon the whole course of their lives.<sup>29</sup> So if the youth and new converts are nurtured through prophetic studies, for the whole course of their lives, then they would be strong in the way of the Lord. For instance, if prophetic studies like Daniel and Revelation seminars are used to teach and nurture our youth and new converts, then majority of them may stay in the church, because some of these studies bring out the identity of the church, as the true church of God for them to understand. Mrs. White puts up that, “the father is a laborer together with God, carrying out the gracious designs of God and establishing in his children upright principles, enabling them to form pure and virtuous characters, because he has preoccupied the soul with that which will enable his children to render obedience not only to their earthly parent but

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<sup>28</sup> E. G. White, *The Acts of The Apostle*. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1946.

<sup>29</sup> *The Biblical Illustrator*, Ages Software, Inc. and Biblesoft, Inc. 2006.

also to their heavenly Father.”<sup>30</sup> This means that, as human as we are, God has entrusted His children to us to nurture in the way of the Lord – bringing them to the knowledge of God in all disciplines including studies in prophecies. She continues that, the father . . . will bind his children to the throne of God by living faith.<sup>31</sup> Whatever parents can do to bring their children to the knowledge of the truths in prophecies would help them in a long way, not to be easily deceived the human foe, hence the admonition to bind their children to the throne of God by living faith. As it has been said to parents to take care of their children in the way of the Lord, so it is with the leaders and ministers of the church, we are to bind the new converts and the youths, added to the family of God to the throne of God by living faith, and train them to the full knowledge of God. Mrs. White reiterates that fathers should understand how to train their children for usefulness and duty.<sup>32</sup>

**Nurturing through Studies of Prophecies in the Church.** The Seventh-day Adventist Church is known for its broad knowledge in the interpretations of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation and other prophetic books in the Bible. Studies in Daniel and Revelation through Revelation Seminars have broadened our horizon. Currently, the Revelation Unlimited, a programme screened on Hope Channel, is an example of the church’s intention to share its knowledge with the world. However, some pastors and elders of today may not see it necessary to study these end-time prophecies and prophecies in general with the church members, let alone the new converts and the youth. E. G. White states emphatically that “the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation should be carefully studied, and in connection with them the words,

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<sup>30</sup> E. G. White. *The Adventist Home*. Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1952; 2002.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

‘Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world’<sup>33</sup> She continues to say that, “when the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience”<sup>34</sup> and cautions that, “it should be studied with reverential awe.”<sup>35</sup>

As the Book of Revelation pronounces blessing for those who read, hear and keep what is written therein. (Rev. 1:3), then it behooves us to nurture the new converts and the youth in these prophecies so as to stabilize them in the Advent faith. Elsewhere, Mrs. White notes, “And as men and women are converted to the truth, those standing at the head of the city mission should, with much prayer, show these new converts how to experience the power of the truth in their lives.”<sup>36</sup> That is, those in the hem of affairs of the church should take it upon themselves, to nurture the new converts to come to the knowledge of the power of the truth through studies of the Word of God – doctrines and prophecies. She continues that, it is necessary to train all our new converts.<sup>37</sup>

Ministers and elders of the church should acknowledge that completing an evangelistic campaign does not make the new converts experientially rooted in the truth. Their knowledge is still to be internalized. The ministers and elders need to go

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<sup>33</sup>E. G. White, *Gospel Workers*, Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association. 1892, 1915.

<sup>34</sup> E. G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1923.

<sup>37</sup>E. G. White Comments, *The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7* Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1957.

<sup>36</sup>E. G. White, *A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education*. Southern Publishing Association, 1933; 2002.

<sup>37</sup>E. G. White, *Manuscript Release vol. 21* Commentary on the Epistle of Ephesians: Medical work to be connected to the Church. (Nos. 1501-1598, 1990 – 1991).

back to the drawing board and deepen the proclamation of the evangelist during the campaign. Mrs. White states that, “Ministers should not feel that their work is finished until those who have accepted the theory of the truth realize indeed the influence of its sanctifying power, and are truly converted.”<sup>38</sup> This shows that ministers and elders have a lot to do after each evangelistic campaign, to nurture the new converts and the youths through studies in prophecies.

It is then necessary to teach and train new converts to become conversant with the prophecies adequately so as to explain vividly what they have studied and also to stabilize them fully in the church.

### **Other Authors’ Writings on Nurturing of New Converts**

**Adventist Authors.** This segment is intended at assembling information about how other professionals and scholars append significance to nurturing in general as a means of keeping new converts in the church. One of the books that will be used extensively in the segment is “*You can keep them if you want*”, written by Late Pastor Jim Cress, a renowned church growth expert in the Seventh-day Adventists fraternity. This book was written based on his doctoral dissertation at Fuller Theological University.<sup>39</sup>

The General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, adopted it as one of the resource books for church growth and nurturing.<sup>40</sup> The book has three parts. The first part is titled “Conversion is a Process, Not an Event.”<sup>41</sup> It gives details on

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<sup>38</sup> E. G. White, *Gospel Workers*. Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1915; 2002.

<sup>39</sup>James A. Cress, *You Can Keep Them If You Care*, Maracle Press Oshawa, 2000. Ontario Canada.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>ibid.

conversion as a process of assimilating and properly integrating new members into the body of existing believers as “proper and serious” disciples of Christ and not just a simple event of baptizing and accession of people who have resolved to follow Christ and consequently have joined the church.<sup>42</sup> For the church to effectively embark on this mission, the author suggests that the church should follow these three theological imperatives; “Developing disciples,”<sup>43</sup> “Nurturing Newborns,”<sup>44</sup> and “Conserving the Catch.”<sup>45</sup>

He highlights that “the product of evangelism must be disciples and not decisions.”<sup>46</sup> He added that “Failure to recognize evangelism as disciple making is a failure to fulfill the gospel commission through which Jesus sent His disciples into all the world to make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all things that He had commanded them.”<sup>47</sup> Additionally, in analyzing nurturing can be compared to the way children are brought up. Cress brings to mind, the analogy of the process of how parents bring up their children to maturity as something similar to the nurturing of new converts. James Cress emphasizes that Walter Henrichsen description of nurturing as something that can be likened to follow-up process like “spiritual pediatrics.”<sup>48</sup> He maintains that “it has to deal with the care and protection of the spiritual infant. It

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>ibid.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Walter A. Henrichsen, *Disciples are Made-Not born*, Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1986, quoted in Cress.

deals with the development of new babies in Christ from the time of their new birth until they grow and provide for themselves.”<sup>49</sup>

The second part tries to develop strategies to keep the members both new and old in the church. There are three crucial strategies that the author talks about, namely: ability to express doctrines of one’s faith; having friends within the church; and involvement of new converts in meaningful activities is discussed.

For the new converts and the youth to be well stabilized and assimilated in the church, then there is a need to keep the truth - doctrines and prophecies, always before them. In doing so, they will be stronger in the faith than ever. The church should abandon the practice on spending less time with the new converts after baptism and take them through series of studies to equip them for service to God and mankind. Mark Finley, a leading Adventist evangelist, asserts that the time, effort, and energy put into new converts is well worth it as they become church leaders in the future and nurture others to become disciples of the Master.<sup>50</sup>In addition, H. C. Lacey stresses that “Bible study, properly pursued, will give intellectual training, as well as spiritual understanding. There should be telescopic study first and microscopic study afterward.”<sup>51</sup>Richard L. Halversen confirms that new believers love prophecy and continues to suggest that, prophecy is probably the reason many came to the evangelistic campaign.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>Mark Finley, *Ministry International Journal for Pastors Evangelism’s Big Picture: From Baptism to Discipleship*. September, 2009.

<sup>51</sup>June 2, 1909 WAsE, GCB 268.9) *General Conference Bulletin*

<sup>52</sup>Richard L. Halversen, *Ministry: Nurturing and Preserving New Converts*, April ed. 2000

Another significant means of stabilizing new converts in the church according to Cress is through the church having meaningful fellowship with them.<sup>53</sup> The old and well reputable members must demonstrate concern in both the spiritual and physical well-being of the new members. They must be visited often and befriended. Cress recognized that “the probability of new members becoming actively involved in the church is directly tied to number of friends they develop soon after joining the church.”<sup>54</sup> Moreover, another point that Cress recommended could help in the integration and stabilization process of new members is by getting them to be active in the church through what they can do best.<sup>55</sup> George E. Knowles puts it forth that, “some type of activity in which the new converts could also participate<sup>56</sup> should be done in the church.

According to *the Breakthrough Series* for teenagers in Adventist schools, upon finalizing the Voice of Prophecy lessons a boy of eleven years of age requested more explanation into some of the prophecies. The correspondence Bible school sent him the book *Daniel and Revelation* by Uriah Smith. After studying the books he was fully established in the church and now serving as co-author of the Breakthrough Series for teenagers.<sup>57</sup>

This survey shows two conclusions. First, while there is a wide spread concern with nurturing in general, there is not much literature and thought on using the study of prophecy as a tool for nurturing and establishing in the church. Second, Prophetic

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<sup>53</sup>Cress.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

<sup>56</sup>George E. Knowles, *How to Help Your Church Grow*, Washington-Hagerstown: Review and Herald Publishing Association

<sup>57</sup>Jerry B. Jerkins. *Breakthrough Series*, “Tomorrow” Tyndale House Publishers Inc. 2012



studies as a tool for nurturing new converts and youth of the church is very essential and should be embraced by all and sundry.

**Non-Adventist Authors on Nurturing.** Theodore Williams, the founder and the first General Secretary of the Indian Evangelical Mission (IEM),<sup>58</sup> once was asked, why should a congress on world evangelization devote time to considering the nurture of believers? And this was the answer he gave: “we must remember that our consideration of strategy, methods, and priorities relating to world evangelization will be incomplete if we do not give some attention to the question of discipling converts and establishing churches.”<sup>59</sup> “He stated later that, nurturing and discipling of new converts is the work of the church, and should be pushed on to any other agency.”<sup>60</sup> After baptism, a new convert is often found to be alert and eager to learn new spiritual truths and take fresh steps of obedience.<sup>61</sup> That is why it is always essential to take them through series of studies including prophecies to stabilize them in the faith.

Another point that Theodore puts across is the need to nurture new converts in order to make them strong, balanced witnessing Christians<sup>62</sup> for Christ. Defining the goals of nurturing new converts, Theodore states that, the aim of nurturing is not to go on endlessly teaching the new converts, so that he is always at the receiving end, but rather he must be matured in love, taking his part in the corporate growth of the body of Christ.<sup>63</sup> He summarized the threefold growth as the new convert, after nurturing

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<sup>58</sup> Theodore Williams, *Let The Earth Hear His Voice: Nurturing and Discipling New Converts*. Bangalore: India.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

<sup>60</sup>ibid.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup>Theodore.

and discipling, should be (1) matured in love (2) soundness in doctrines and (3) involved in building up the church.<sup>64</sup>

Another author with the name, Waldo J. Werning, who authored the book, *The Seed-Planting Church: Nurturing Churches to Health*,<sup>65</sup> and thirty other books, but now serves as director of the Discipleship/ Stewardship Center gives his perspectives on nurturing, basing it primarily on the principles of Agriculture.

Werning presented the art of nurturing from Agricultural point of view. He alerted his views on the agricultural principle Christ used in Luke 8: 4-15; Mark 4: 26-27; and Matt 13:24-30. He demonstrated that church growth and nurturing strategies involve spiritual planting, watering and fertilizing; in other words , planting and caring for the seed to grow is very important than focusing on the harvesting principle as seen in the traditional institutional churches.<sup>66</sup>

Werning advocates that the nurturing church does its work on the entire field but not only on the fields which it believes fertile. He articulates that “the heavenly view sees the body of Christ struggling to produce a harvest from fields that have too often been neglected.”<sup>67</sup> Alternatively, “a farmer with harvesting mentality would choose only good ground. But that would cause much land and plants or trees to be ignored and relegated as useless.”<sup>68</sup> However, since the entire Church including the new

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>Waldo J. Werning, *The Seed-Planting Church: Nurturing Churches to Health* (St. Charles, IL: Church-Smart Resources, 2003).

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

believer must be nurtured for the kingdom of God, he accentuates that “the wise planter tends the entire acreage – all believers in the Church.”<sup>69</sup>

He emphasizes that Bible study, the application of spiritual gifts by individuals, faithfulness in stewardship and healthy relationships, which centers on mentoring and enabling all persons to be cared for, is essential in nurturing of new members.<sup>70</sup>

A dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth, known as Thom S. Rainer, who authored a book called *High Expectations: The Remarkable Secret for Keeping People in Your Church*, carried out a research to unearth the secrets of 287 Southern Baptist Churches in United States, who have been able to retain their members successfully.<sup>71</sup> The research discovered that Bible Study, both personal and participation in Sunday School classes; permitting new members to discover and make use of their spiritual gifts; effective pastoral care and long pastoral tenure; expository sermons; vibrant youth and children ministries; a church having a clear mission and vision statements; effective new member classes; and prayer ministry that involved all are essential in retaining members.<sup>72</sup>

Rainer states emphatically that “time is of essence in any assimilation or discipleship efforts toward new Christians.” “Delays” he says “beyond even one week can be problematic.”<sup>73</sup>

In the nutshell, if all the essentials like bible studies-both doctrines and prophecies (sound doctrines), befriending new converts, follow – up, seeing to the

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

<sup>71</sup>Thom S. Rainer, *High Expectations: The Remarkable Secret for Keeping People in Your Church* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999).

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

<sup>73</sup>Rainer.

needs of new converts, and others are taking into cognizance, new converts will be well-established, assimilated, and involved in the church leading to maturity in the body of Christ.

## CHAPTER 3

### DESCRIPTION OF LOCAL SETTING

#### **The Profile of Ghana**

Ghana, a country on the West Coast of Africa, is one of the most thriving democracies on the continent. It has often been referred to as an "island of peace" in one of the most chaotic regions on earth. It shares boundaries with Togo to the east, la Cote d'Ivoire to the west, Burkina Faso to the north and the Gulf of Guinea, to the south. A country covering an area of 238,500 square kilometers, Ghana has an estimated population of 22 million, drawn from more than one hundred ethnic groups - each with its own unique language. English, however, is the official language, a legacy of British colonial rule.

#### **The Profile of Ashanti Region**

Ashanti, with Kumasi as its capital, lies approximately at the centre of the country. It covers an area of 24,390 square kilometers representing 10.2% of the land area of Ghana. Ashanti is the most populous region in Ghana. According to the 2000 Population and Housing Census Report, the Region recorded a total of 3,612,950 representing 19.1% of national total of 18,912,079. Males constitute 50.2%. Out of the three hundred and sixty four (364) settlements described as urban in Ghana i.e. with a population of 5000 and above, fifty eight (58) are in Ashanti. Fifty-one point three (51.3%) per cent of the people live in urban settlements. The Region has eighteen administrative districts, the highest in the country. It is made up of one Metropolitan

Assembly (Kumasi metropolitan Assembly) and seventeen (17) other District Assemblies. The country has a vibrant telecommunications sector, with five cellular phone operators and several internet service providers.<sup>1</sup>

There are as many as thirty-three (33) constituencies giving the Region a strong representation in Parliament. Ashanti has thirty-three (33) Traditional Council areas. A Paramount Chief heads each council. All the Paramount chiefs also owe allegiance to Otumfuo, the Asantehene who is the head of the Asanteman Council. Otumfuo is also the head of the Kumasi Traditional Council. Ashanti is affectionately dubbed the Resource Basket of Ghana because it is endowed with numerous resources.

“The Region has abundant food supplies to feed its people and others. These include plantain, maize, cassava, cocoyam, yam, vegetables and other cereals and legumes. Irish potatoes also thrive well in Nsuta near Mampong. The industrial crops grown include cocoa, oil palm, tobacco, best fiber, cotton, citrus and cashew. The Region has the largest number of Poultry Industries in the Country. It is also the home of large poultry feed mills. A sizeable quantity of bamboos and canes grow wild in the forest belt. The Region is endowed with large deposits of gold and bauxite. Other mineral deposits of economic value found in the Region include manganese, iron, silica, clay and limestone. Traces of copper, platinum, lithium, tin arsenic and mica are also found.”<sup>2</sup>

The Region has several tourism potentials including Lake Bosomtwe. Supplementary to these the people in the Region display perhaps the highest entrepreneurial expertise and drive in the country, prepared to encourage partnership with local and foreign investors for the development of the Region. The Region's vast natural resources, including marble land and mineral deposits, have led to the establishment of some industries. These include Wood Processing and Furniture, Beverage (both alcoholic and non-alcoholic), capital goods and metal fabrication. The

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<sup>1</sup>E. A. Boateng. Ghanaweb, [http://www.country\\_information/GhanaHomePage/ghanaweb.com/Ghanaweb](http://www.country_information/GhanaHomePage/ghanaweb.com/Ghanaweb), 1994-2013.

<sup>2</sup>Kwamina B. Dickson Ghanaweb, [http://www.Geography/ashanti\\_region.php/GhanaHomePage/ghanaweb.com/Ghanaweb](http://www.Geography/ashanti_region.php/GhanaHomePage/ghanaweb.com/Ghanaweb) 1994-2013.

Suame Magazine located in Kumasi is recognized as the most efficient mechanical, electrical and car body building workshop in the sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>3</sup>

**Politics in Ghana.** Ghana is a country with a multi-party system of governance. It had strove from the time of colonialism in the hands of the British from its inception as a nation, till it got independence through some stalwarts who laid down their lives for the independence and emancipation of the people.

“In 1957, Ghana (formerly known as the Gold Coast) became the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to gain independence. After leading the country for nine years, the nation's founding president, Kwame Nkrumah was overthrown in a coup d'état in 1966. After Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana was ruled by a series of military despots with intermittent experiments with democratic rule, most of which were curtailed by military takeovers. The latest and most enduring democratic experiment started in 1992 and as a multi-party system of democracy, Ghana is dominated by two parties, namely: National Democratic Congress (NDC) and National Patriotic Party (NPP). This democratic experiment, which has now taken root in the country, is what has gained recognition for Ghana as a leading democracy in Africa.”<sup>4</sup>

**Economy in Ghana.** Ghana has been blessed with many natural resources like gold, silver, bauxite, diamond, manganese and others. The economy of the country has gone through a lot of strides towards reaching middle income state. However, due to mismanagement on the part of different successive governments, the economy has not reached the expectation of the citizens.

“A recent discovery of oil in the Gulf of Guinea could make Ghana an important oil producer and exporter in the next few years. The country's economy is dominated

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

by agriculture, which employs about 40 percent of the working population. Ghana is one of the leading exporters of cocoa in the world. It is also a significant exporter of commodities such as gold and lumber.

Ghana has several tourist attractions such as the castles, Damango Tourist center, Fioma Monkey Sanctuary and others. Most of the major international airlines fly into and from the international airport in Accra.”<sup>5</sup> Recently, domestic flights are shuttling between regions.

**Socio-cultural Practices in Ghana.** Ghana is one of the countries in West Africa abounds with many cultures emanated from different tribes. These tribes occupy the ten regions of the country. The tribes are headed by kings and chiefs with their sub chiefs in some parts of the regions. The socio-cultural practices are very dear to the indigenes of the nation, as K. O. Akuoko says in his journal, that, “socio-cultural practices are distinctive, spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or a group.”<sup>6</sup>

Some of these socio-cultural practices are funerals, naming ceremonies, festivals, visiting relatives etc. Culture in the country sometimes serves as a tool to nurture people to know how to live and behave toward others and their God.<sup>7</sup>

**Religion in Ghana.** Ghana is not a haven for socio-cultural practices alone, but also harbours religions as well. Many religious sects are found in Ghana. The country has about 69% as Christians, with 16% as Muslims and 8% are traditionalists, whilst the 7% left comprises of other religious groups like Hinduism, Buddhism and etc.

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<sup>5</sup> ibid

<sup>6</sup> Traditional Values, Socio-Cultural Factors and Human Resource Management Practices in Public Sector Organization in Ghana, Journal of Science & Technology (Ghana) Vol. 28(3) 2008.

<sup>7</sup> ibid



Almost all these religious sects have ways of nurturing their new converts the way of the lord they worship.<sup>8</sup>

### **The Profile of Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ghana**

The Seventh-day Adventist in has experienced a lot of growth in many ways. It is now one of the giants in the West-Central African Division, headquartered in Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire. From the End of Year Report, presented by the Executive Secretary of the Ghana Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists (GUC), the Union Conference has in total 1,166 churches, 1660 companies and a baptized membership of membership of 368,171 (the highest in the West-Central African Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church).<sup>9</sup> The GUC has eight fields as of now, namely: Central Ghana Conference (CGC), South Central Ghana Conference (SCGC), Midwest Ghana Conference (MGC), South Ghana Conference (SGC), South West Ghana Conference (SWGC), East Ghana Conference (EGC), North Ghana Mission (NGM), and newly created field, Mid-South Ghana Administrative Unit (MSGAU

**History of the Adventist Church in Ghana.** The Adventist Church in Ghana started 44years after the Great Disappointment, and 25years after the Church got its name Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1863. It all begun through a pamphlet on the Sabbath found on a sea shore by a man called Dolphijn. After reading the pamphlet, he found out that it all about the Sabbath. He became convinced and went through it with his family. The family accepted the Sabbath truth and decided to worship on that day. They wrote to the address found at the back of the pamphlet and missionaries were sent to take them through the doctrines of the Church. After their baptism, the good

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> End of Year Report of Ghana Union Conference (2012) Advent Press: Ghana.

news about the Sabbath started spreading like fire and rested in the Akan area of the country, where the Sabbath was been observed in another way. People in the Akan area were already worshipping God through a medium called “Nyame dua” with its three branches, representing the triune God. So it was not difficult for them to embrace the Seventh-day Sabbath doctrine. This acceptance has risen giving birth to Conferences, mission and administrative unit. All this growth came about due to unprecedented way of evangelism that went around during the earlier stages of the church’s history in Ghana.<sup>10</sup>

As the Sabbath School is said to be the heart<sup>11</sup> of the church and the Health Ministries, its right hand<sup>12</sup> so it is seen that evangelism is the wheel on which the church drives. Evangelism always is and must be followed by nurturing. Christ emphasizing this commanded His followers in Matt. 28: 19, 20 to go and preach the gospel to all people, baptizing them in the name of the triune God, teaching them to obey everything that He has taught them. Here it is seen that Jesus Christ is telling his disciples to continue the nurturing of new converts who have joined the church through evangelism.

Nurturing of new converts in Ghana has been the basis on which the church in Ghana has grown rapidly in years back. The rate the church grew in its beginnings is not the same today, in that, in those days new converts were kept in a new class all together, and an elder well-versed in church doctrines and prophecies was appointed for the class for at least a month, before they are joined to the rest of the congregation.

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<sup>10</sup> Kofi Owusu-Mensa. *Ghana Seventh-day Adventism: A History Vol. 1*. Advent Press, 2005. Ghana.

<sup>11</sup> The Sabbath School Department, *Sabbath School Resource Manual*, Advent Press, 2002. Ghana.

<sup>88</sup>The Department of Health Ministries, *The Health Ministries Handbook*, Review and Herald Publication Association, 2000.

Throughout the month, they are introduced to topics like “the True Church”, the Prophetic Church as found in Revelation Chapter 10 and others. Evangelism took different turn when Daniel and Revelation Seminars came to the centre stage during the early 90s with “Harvest 90”. Revelation seminars continued to be the major tool in winning and nurturing new converts especially in second cycle schools. This type of studies also served as a wheel of reviving old members in the churches. “Thousand Days of Reaping” also came in the early parts of 1995s to add more impetus to what the Revelation Seminars and the Harvest 90 had done to the Adventists Church in Ghana.

This was the period the Church growth leapt with many churches being established in the big cities. One elder called Paul Nsiah Jnr., who was at the forefront of this vigorous evangelism recently said orally when interviewed that, “it was a period when satellites campaigns went on in all towns and six churches were established in three weeks.”<sup>13</sup> Through these studies in Daniel and Revelation, many new converts were nurtured and established in the churches. Some of the new churches sprang out of this proliferation of evangelism was the New Tafo Seventh-day Adventist Church under the Ash-Town District of the Seventh-day Adventist Churches, which later gave birth to the New Tafo District of the Seventh-day Adventist Churches.

### **Profile of the New Tafo District of Seventh-day Adventist**

The New Tafo District of Seventh-day Adventist Church is one of the forty-two districts in the South Central Ghana Conference. The headquarters of the district is the Seventh-day Adventist Church, New Tafo. The district is situated near the Manhyia

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<sup>13</sup> Paul Nsiah Jnr. An interviewee at Seventh-day Adventist Church, New Tafo.

Palace of the Ashanti Kingdom on the north. It has seven churches with six as organized and one as a company. The membership of the district is about 3022 with 250 baptismal candidates, being prepared for baptism. The membership represents about 3.8% of the membership of the Conference. The district as it has already been said has at its disposal, three ministers and cluster of elders. The Manhyia Constituency has a population of about 153,050. Majority of the people in this constituency are mainly businessmen and women, traders and automobile workers, popularly known as fitters.<sup>14</sup>

The New Tafo District of the Seventh-day Adventist Churches comprises six organized churches with one company church. The churches are New Tafo, Aboabo, Asokore Mampong, Tafo Nhyiaeso, Asabi, Sepe Timpom, being the organized and Boaban, the company. The New Tafo District is situated at west of the Manhyia Palace, where the great king of the Ashanti Kingdom, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II resides. It is within this district that Kumasi Airport is sited. The district has three pastors managing the affairs of the district and a number of elders assisting the ministers. Two of these pastors are ordained. The district has a membership of 3022 as of the third quarter, 2012. It also has a throng of youths numbering 1289, outside toddlers. The district, as of now has about 1958 of its baptized membership as women forming approximately 64% and 1113 are men, forming approximately 36%. The statistical report for the district from 2008 to 2012 is as follows (Table 2).

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<sup>14</sup> District Report to the South Central Ghana Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church.

*Table 2. Statistical Report of the District from 2008 – 2012*

Church	2009	2010	2011	2012
New Tafo	1455	1820	1782	1782
Aboabo	298	328	359	364
Asokore Mampong	220	245	265	270
Sepe Timpom	201	232	261	255
Tafo Nhyiaeso	197	212	218	203
Asabi	86	95	106	106
Boaban	—	—	—	22
Total	2457	2932	2980	3022

***History of the District.*** The New Tafo District of Seventh-day Adventists was calved from the Ash-Town District to stand on its own in the early 1998 and first administered by Pr. Michael Achianor. Many pastors have worked with the district since its inception. The district has given birth to two other districts in the conference, namely Airport and Yennyawso-Anyarno Districts. It was one of the districts in the South Central Ghana Conference that has to be divided few years after its inception. As of now the New Tafo District is the considered to be the third biggest district in the Conference.

***Evangelism and nurturing in retrospect in the New Tafo District.***The rapid growth of the New Tafo District was not a stroke of luck, in that it subjected itself to the Daniel and Revelation Seminar throughout the District in its nurturing processes. But what do we see today in the district? The nurturing of new converts and church members at large through prophecies has gone down tremendously. Hence, the necessity to use studies in prophecies, to nurture new converts and the youths of the church to stabilize them fully in the church. Ellen G. White says that many people do not comprehend what the prophecies are saying about our world today and it is our responsibility to give them enlightenment in the prophecies.<sup>15</sup> She continues that let

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<sup>15</sup>E. G. White. *Evangelism*, Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1946.

not the solemn scenes which prophecy has revealed, be left untouched.<sup>16</sup> From this it has been seen that we have a responsibility to work at, and if we do not study the prophecies as they have been revealed to us, then how can we warn the world of the impending crisis? This is why it is important to nurture new converts, the youth and even old members in the prophetic studies, so as to make them ablest with the end time prophecies.

### **Research Methodology**

This methodology describes the procedures, materials and techniques used in the study. It looks at study type and design, study area and profile, population sampling, data collection, data handling, management and analysis of data, ethical considerations, assumptions, limitations, expected output and dissemination of study results.

**Study Type and Design.** The research work was a descriptive but purely quantitative study and exploratory in nature, involving pastors, elders, new converts and yet to be baptized youths in the New Tafo District of Seventh-day Adventist Church.

**Study Population.** The new converts and the youth in the district form part of the study population of the research work. They included the baptismal candidates that the churches have got from campaigns organized by the District, and the youths in the Youth Churches in all the churches in the District Pastors, elders and departmental directors will also be involved.

**Sample size.** A sampling size of 200 people comprising Pastors, Elders, Departmental Leaders, some of the new converts and youths in the churches was

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

randomly selected to answer the questionnaires for the study. Interviews would be done to ascertain whether prophetic studies had really stabilized new converts and youth in the church.

**Sampling Method.** A purposive sampling was used to select the new converts and the youth who have lived in the churches in the district for not less than one year. The choice of sampling technique was due to the unique experiences encountered by new converts and youths in the churches and which could inform the assessment of new converts and youths nurtured in the churches in the district through prophetic studies.

**Data Collection Method.** The data collection method used was the interview technique where an interviewer administered procedure was employed. The tool used for the interview was an interview guide (questionnaires). The interview guide contained open and close ended questions organized under the purpose of the study.

**Data Management and Analysis.** The interview guide was coded serially after each interview session with the selected new converts and youths. Data collected were cleaned, entered, processed and analyzed. All quantitative data collected were entered and analyzed using the Stata version 12.0. The proportional distribution of responses were determined and presented in tables and charts.

### **Quantitative Researches (Survey) of the Local Setting**

The researcher interviewed respondents to ascertain some background information that can have effect on the data being collected. Some of the things that were used for the interview were demographic issues pertaining to their background.

### **Background Information**

Table 3 shows the background characteristics of the respondents. There were four pastors among those interviewed constituting 2%, elders 21%, departmental leaders 33.5% and membership 43.5%. On the level of education, it was seen that, none of the respondents had formal education, whilst primary education 1%, secondary education 3%, college education 52%, tertiary education 32% and professionals were 12%. 62.5% of the respondents were married, with singles constituting 32.5% and the divorcees made up the rest, 5%. In the case of gender, majority of the respondents were male representing 63% and the rest, 37% were females. Concerning age group, 85 people in the group of 40 -49 years, forming 42.5% of the respondents and 32 respondents comprising 16% were in the age group of 20 – 29, whilst the under 19 group made up only 7%. When respondents were asked years spent in the church, 106 respondents who have spent years in the range of 10 – 19 comprising 53%, 28 respondents constituting 14% had spent between 20 – 29 years in the church, while only two of the respondents forming 1% had spent sixty years and above. In the case of baptism, 188 composing 94% were baptized whereas 6% were not baptized.



*Table 3. Background Information*

Variables	No. of respondents = 200	% of respondents
<b>POSITION HELD IN CHURCH</b>		
Pastor	4	2.0
Elder	42	21.0
Departmental Leader	67	33.5
Member	87	43.5
<b>LEVEL OF EDUCATION</b>		
No formal Education	0	0
Primary	2	1
Secondary	6	3
College	104	52
Tertiary	64	32
Professional	24	12
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>		
Married	125	62.5
Singles	65	32.5
Divorced	10	5.0
<b>SEX</b>		
Male	126	63
Female	74	37
<b>AGE</b>		
60+	18	9.0
50 – 59	24	12.0
40 – 49	85	42.5
30 – 39	32	16.0
20 – 29	27	13.5
Under 19	14	7.0
<b>YEARS SPENT IN CHURCH</b>		
From Birth	12	6.0
0 – 9 years	24	12.0
10 – 19 years	106	53.0
20 – 29 years	28	14.0
30 – 39 years	16	8.0
40 – 49 years	5	2.5
50 – 59 years	7	3.5
60+	2	1.0
<b>Are you Baptized?</b>		
Yes	188	94
No	12	6

## Mode of Entrance

Table 4 demonstrates responses of the mode of entrance into the church by the respondents. In the case of being influenced by factors to join the church, 90 respondents constituting 45% said they joined the church through teachings/doctrines, while 105 of the respondents constituting 52.5% came through relationships and only 5 respondents forming 2.5% joined through music.

When respondents were asked whether they were instructed before joining the church, 120 respondents constituting 60% said they were instructed very much before joining the church, whereas 65 of the respondents said they were moderately instructed, but 15 respondents asserted that they were not so much instructed.

When the respondents were asked about the mode of joining the church, 136 respondents made up of 68% came into the church through baptism, whilst 58 of the respondents constituting 29% were transferred from other Adventist churches, but 6 respondents composing of 3% entered the church through profession by faith.

*Table 4. Mode of Entrance in to the Church*

Variable	No. of Respondents = 200	Percentage (%)
<b>INFLUENCE TO JOIN CHURCH</b>		
Teachings/Doctrines	90	45.0
Music	5	2.5
Marriage	23	11.5
Perceived fellowship among members	28	14.0
Relationship with friends/Family Members	54	27.0
<b>INSTRUCTED BEFORE BAPTISM</b>		
Very Much		
Moderately	120	60.0
Not so Much	65	32.5
	15	7.5
<b>CHURCH MEMBERSHIP</b>		
Baptism	136	68
Transfer	58	29
Profession of Faith	6	3

## Perception about Nurturing

Table 5 reveals responses made by respondents concerning their perception about nurturing. It was seen in their responses that, concerning the knowledge of respondents on nurturing, 144 of them comprising 72% answered in the affirmative that they are very well knowledgeable about nurturing, even as 52 respondents constituting 26% said they know about nurturing moderately, but 2% said they have very little knowledge about it. In the case of when nurturing should take place, 195 respondents comprising 97.5 asserted that Nurturing should be done always, while 1.5% and 1% said not always and sometimes respectively. Concerning the appropriate time to start nurturing, 184 of the respondents constituting 92% said that nurturing should start immediately after baptism, however 15 of them composing 7.5% preferred later after baptism. But only one respondent had no knowledge about the appropriate time to start nurturing.

*Table 5. Perception about Nurturing in the church*

Variables	No. of Respondents= 200	Percentage (%)
<b>KNOWLEDGE OF NURTURING</b>		
Very well	144	72
Moderately	52	26
Not so well	4	2
<b>WHEN NURTURING TAKES PLACE</b>		
Always	195	97.5
Not always	3	1.5
Sometimes	2	1.0
<b>TIME TO START NURTURING</b>		
Immediately after baptism	184	92.0
Later after baptism	15	7.5
No knowledge	1	0.5
<b>LENGTH OF TIME OF NURTURING</b>		
Two months	13	6.5
Three months	10	5.0
Four months	20	10.0
Always	157	78.5

## **Bible Studies in the Church**

Table 6 demonstrates that a bible study is one of the best tools outside relationships, belongingness, welfare services and many others. It was seen that concerning what tool to use to help nurture new converts firmly in the church, 84 respondents comprising 42% said the best tool is biblical doctrines. And 96 of the respondents constituting 48% said the tool is biblical prophecies, while 6 people representing 3% agreed on devotionals. But 14 of them decided on sermons. In the case of studying all biblical prophecies, 198 respondents composing 99% answered in the affirmative that all prophecies must be studied whereas only 2 constituting 1% said no. Moreover, on the issue of topics that excite us most in the bible, 155 respondents constituting 77.5% chose biblical prophecies, but 31 of them comprising 15.5 said doctrines, whilst 7% responded that stories excite people most.

*Table 6. Bible Studies in the Church*

Variable	No. of Respondents = 200	Percentage (%)
<b>TOOLS TO USE IN NURTURING</b>		
Biblical doctrines	84	42
Biblical prophecies	96	48
Devotionals	6	3
Sermons	14	7
<b>ALL BIBLICAL PROPHECIES</b>		
Yes	198	99
No	2	1
<b>EXCITING TOPICS IN BIBLE</b>		
Prophecies	155	77.5
Stories	14	7.0
Doctrines	31	15.5

## **Types of Prophecies**

Concerning types of prophecies as seen on table 7 below, the respondents do appreciate when studied in the church, 153 of them constituting 76.5% responded that they appreciate eschatological prophecies, whilst 34 respondents composing 17% said

they appreciate historical prophecies. Moreover, 7 of the respondents comprising 3.5% chose conditional prophecies while 6 of them forming 3% opted for predictive prophecies. In the case of types of prophecies to be taught in the church, 169 respondents constituting 84.5% opted for eschatological prophecies, while 22 of them comprising 11% chose historical prophecies. However, 3.5% said they like conditional prophecies to be taught in the church and 2 respondents composing 1% preferred predictive. Out of the 200 respondents interviewed, 98.5% said that whenever prophecies are taught in the church, they become happy, but 0.5% said there is no happiness, whereas 2 respondents agreed that they are sometimes happy. With reference to spiritual improvement, 98% thought they are spiritually improved after studying prophecies, whilst 1.5% said that they are uplifted sometimes. But one respondent stressed that he sees no improvement. In relation to prophecies establishing our faith in the church, 98.5% of the respondents agreed that it does, but only one respondent said no and 2 of them thought that prophecies do not really establish our faith.

### **Establishing Prophetic School in the Churches**

Table 8 demonstrates the essence of establishing prophetic schools in the churches in the New Tafo District. 168 respondents constituting 84% asserted in the affirmative, whereas 4% of the respondents said no to the idea. But 12% of the respondents answered not really. In the case of whether prophecies stabilizes the youth and new converts in the faith, 127 of the respondents forming 63.5% said that they strongly agree to that opinion, whilst 34% stressed that they agree moderately. But 2.5% of the respondents strongly disagree to whether it stabilizes the youth and the new converts. Concerning difficulty in prophetic interpretations, 18% of the

respondents agreed that prophetic interpretations are sometimes difficult, whereas 28% said it is difficult. However, 118 of the respondents representing 59% thought it is not difficult at all. As to whether we have to agree to all interpretations made by the church, 169 respondents comprising 84.5% strongly agree to that effect. 29 of them forming 14.5% moderately agree to the church's interpretation, but 1% strongly disagrees to all the interpretations made by the church.

*Table 7. Types of Prophecies*

Variable	No. of Respondents = 200	Percentage (%)
<b>TYPES OF PROPHECIES APPRECIATED</b>		
Eschatological	153	76.5
Historical	34	17.0
Conditional	7	3.5
Predictive	6	3.0
<b>PROPHECIES TAUGHT</b>		
Eschatological	169	84.5
Historical	22	11.0
Predictive	2	1.0
Conditional	7	3.5
<b>HAPPY IN PROPHECIES</b>		
Yes	197	98.5
No	1	0.5
<i>Table 7 (Continued)</i>		
Sometimes	2	1.0
<b>SPIRITUAL IMPROVEMENT</b>		
Always	196	98.0
Sometimes	3	1.5
Not at all	1	0.5
<b>ESTABLISHES FAITH</b>		
Yes	197	98.5
No	1	0.5
Not Really	2	1.0

*Table 8. Establishing Prophetic School*

Variable	No. of Respondents = 200	Percentage (%)
<b>ESTABLISHMENT OF PROPHETIC SCHOOLS</b>		
Yes	168	84
No	8	4
Not Really	24	12
<b>PROPHECIES STABILIZES YOUTH AND NEW CONVERTS IN THE FAITH</b>		
Strongly Agree	127	63.5
Moderately Agree	68	34.0
Strongly Disagree	5	2.5
<b>DIFFICULTY IN PROPHETIC INTERPRETATION</b>		
Yes	56	28
No	118	59
Sometimes	36	18
<b>AGREE TO ALL INTERPRETATIONS BY THE CHURCH</b>		
Strongly Agree	169	84.5
Moderately Agree	29	14.5
Strongly Disagree	2	1.0

### **Involving Prophecies during Divine Service**

Table 9 expresses the importance of involving prophetic studies during divine service. Concerning this, 179 respondents constituting 89.5% said they will be very much happy, however, one of the respondents said he will not be so much happy with the idea. Notwithstanding, 10% said they will be moderately happy to the idea of involving prophetic studies during divine service. In the case of prophetic studies benefiting the church, 197 respondents comprising 98.5% said it will benefit them very much. But 1.5% agreed that it will moderately benefit them. Concerning difficulty in studying prophecies alone, 79 respondents composing 39.5% thought it is very difficult. However, 98 of the respondents constituting 49% said it is not so difficult and 11.5% agreed that it is moderately difficult. When the respondents were asked whether they will be happy, if called upon to come and teach prophecies, 143

respondents constituting 71.5% said that they will be very happy, whereas 54 of the respondents comprising 27% said they will be quite happy but 3 respondents composing 1.5% said that they will not be so happy to be called upon to teach prophecies.

*Table 9. Involving Prophecies during Divine Service*

Variables	No. of Respondents = 200	Percentage (%)
<b>INVOLVING PROPHECIES IN DIVINE SERVICE</b>		
Very Much Happy	179	89.5
Moderately Happy	20	10.0
Not So Much Happy	1	0.5
<b>BENEFITS TO THE CHURCH</b>		
Very Much	197	98.5
Moderately	3	1.5
Not So Much	0	0
<b>DIFFICULTY IN STUDYING ALONE</b>		
Very Difficult	79	39.5
Moderately Difficult	23	11.5
Not So Difficult	98	49.0
<b>HAPPY IF CALLED TO TEACH PROPHECIES</b>		
Very Happy	143	71.5
Quite Happy	54	27.0
Not So Happy	3	1.5

The chapter 1 of my research work dealt with the introduction to the research work, where problem statement, hypothesis of the study, justification of the study purpose of study and others were discussed.

Literature analysis were done in chapter 2 to identify and appreciate the write-ups of authors who have written extensively on nurturing, but write-ups on using prophetic studies to nurture new converts were sparsely found. In its place, commentaries were predominantly used.

The format to be used for the project was explained and the methodology was done to ascertain the type of study used, which in this research was descriptive but



purely quantitative study and exploratory in nature, involving new converts and yet to be baptized youths in the New Tafo District of Seventh-day Adventist Church. The new converts and the youth in the district formed the study population of the research work, with the sampling size of 200 selected randomly from all churches in the New Tafo District.

## CHAPTER 4

### PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT FOR NURTURING NEW CONVERTS

This chapter deals with program development for nurturing new converts to establish them in the church and to make them useful to the body of Christ. It deals with programs like bible studies which are organized on Sundays for the new converts and the youth. Apart from having bible studies organized for the new converts and the youths in the churches of the district, program is designed for the new converts and the youths as well as the churches to train and equip them for the programs ahead.

This program design is done through action plans 1-6. Action plan 1 is friendship evangelism in which members are just to make friends with their contacts by praying with them and at the same period, Pastors and Laity are trained in the studies of prophecies, precisely Daniel and Revelation. Action plan 2 is the period in which visitation is done throughout the selected churches, involving all the departments in each church, in the communities where the campaigns are taking place. In Action plan 3, a 2-weeks campaign are conducted by the trained pastors and elders in the selected churches in their specific communities. After the completion of the two weeks campaign, action plan 4, which is follow-up is done in all the selected churches by some of the team members. Action plan 5 is, the keeping of new converts and the youths for four (4) weeks through studies in prophecies where questions they could not asked during the campaign, would be asked. Then lastly, action plan 6 is establishing Prophetic School for the District on Sunday's mornings to equip and entrench the new converts and the youths, deep in the Christian faith. After this, the implementation

processes are done for the program that have been designed. In this implementation processes, action plans 1-6 are implemented to make the program development a success. This action plans are mainly done through biblical prophecies, precisely Daniel and Revelation Seminars. Then to conclude this chapter, evaluation of every action plan explored, is done to ascertain whether they were successful or not.

### **Program Design**

The researcher designs a program to enhance the nurturing of new converts and the youths in the churches through the studies in Prophecies. In the design, the action plans summarized above, are used as a program design to make the research a success. The goal of this design is to help nurture the new converts who would come out of this program, with the youths to be entrenched deeply in the church's faith.

### **Action Plan 1 (Friendship Evangelism)**

A friendship evangelism takes off first. Members of each of the organized churches in the district are asked to choose three continuous Sabbaths during the divine service time to make friends with the people in their communities. In this friendship evangelism, members are asked to just pray with their contacts. Within this same period of three weeks, where its Sabbaths are being used for friendship evangelism, a one-week workshop is organized for the district on how to present Revelation in the form of the church's doctrine with ease. The trainees are mainly the pastors and the laity. Different facilitators are invited to give lectures on Revelation. Some of the topics to be treated by the facilitators are listed in Table 10.

*Table 10: Workshop on Revelation*

TIME/DAY	9.00AM – 11.00AM	11.30AM-1.30PM	2.00PM – 4.00PM
SUNDAY	CHRIST AND THE CANDLESTICKS	CHRIST, CENTRE OF REVELATION	THE MESSAGE OF THE THRONES
MONDAY	THE 7-CHURCHES IN ASIA MINOR	THE SEVEN SEALS	THE SEVEN TRUMPETS
TUESDAY	MYSTERIOUS HORSES	THE SEALING	SAINTS UNDER THE ALTAR
WEDNESDAY	WORSHIP IN REVELATION	GOD’S LAST MESSAGE	THE GREAT JUDGMENT
THURSDAY	THE MARK OF THE BEAST	THE GREAT WHORE	REVELATION’S GLORIOUS VISIT
FRIDAY	THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON	THE 7 – LAST PLAGUES	IS DEATH THE LAST ENEMY?
SATURDAY	THE TRUE CHURCH	GOD’S PEOPLE DELIVERED	THE NEW EARTH

During this one week intensive programme, questions are allowed by the facilitators from the trainees and members who are participants.

### **Action Plan 2 (Visitation)**

The second action plan deals with the visit to the communities where the campaigns are to take place. These visits are done by all departments of the organized churches. Each church is asked to choose from the each department in the church members whom the church would depend upon for the saturation. Each community is also grouped into zones to be taken care of by a group of church members. The table 11 below shows how each church is grouped as compared to the groupings of the communities in the district. The members in each group would move in pairs.

*Table 11. Groupings of Selected Churches*

Church	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3
New Tafo	40 pairs	40 pairs	40 pairs
Aboabo	30 pairs	30 pairs	30 pairs
Asokore Mampong	20 pairs	20 pairs	20 pairs
Tafo Nhyiaeso	20 pairs	20 pairs	20 pairs
Asabi	10 pairs	10 pairs	10 pairs
Sepe Timpom	15 pairs	15 pairs	15 pairs

These groups of pairs would go to the houses assigned to them in the communities of the various churches to befriend the indigenes and pray with them.

The time allotted for each pair in this exercise would be one hour each night throughout the week. The participating departments would be the Choir, Singing Band, the Youth, the Personal Ministries, the Women's Ministries and others.

During the visitation, names of prospects are noted from the visitation teams to work on them through prayers to lift them to the Lord who brings repentance. Invitations are also extended during the visitation to enhance their coming to the two-week campaign programme planned for all the participating churches.

### **Action Plan 3**

After the visitation programme, comes the third action plan. This deals with a two-week evangelistic campaign programme to be conducted by Pastors and the Laity. The workshop's topics studied, during the friendship evangelism period would be used during these campaigns. The topics are taught extensively by the speakers every night. Question boxes would be provided for all the sites. The topics are the same everywhere and would be organized in such a way that, what is presented in Site A would be the same to be presented in Site B. The topics for the two-week campaign are as follows (Table 12).

*Table 12: Topics for the Campaign*

FIRST WEEK	TOPIC
Sunday	Christ's Message to the 7 Churches in Asia Minor
Monday	Christ – the Centre of the Book of Revelation
Tuesday	Worship in the Book of Revelation
Wednesday	Mysterious Horses
Thursday	The Seven Seals
Friday	The Seal of God
Saturday (Morning Session)	The True Church of God
Saturday (Evening Session)	God's Last Message to a Dying World
SECOND WEEK	TOPIC
Sunday	The Great Judgment of All time
Monday	Revelation's Glorious Visit
Tuesday	The Mark of the Beast
Wednesday	The Seven Last Plagues
Thursday	Is Death the Last Enemy?
Friday	God's People Delivered
Saturday (Morning Session)	Cloth Dipped in Blood
Saturday (Evening Session)	The New Earth

Programme is planned for each night so as to make the campaign attractive to draw prospects, passersby and the members. Music, health, quizzes and other interesting things would also be used to entice prospects. The programme is as follows (Table 13).

*Table 13. Programme for the 2-Weeks Campaign*

Programme for the 2 – Weeks Campaign	
Song Service	6:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Gifts and Quizzes	7:00 p.m. – 7:08 p.m.
Health Talk	7:10 p.m. – 7:25 p.m.
Theme Song	7:25 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
LECTURE	7:30 p.m. – 8:15 p.m.
Benediction	8:15 p.m. – 8:20 p.m.
A Time with New Converts	8:20 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

#### **Action Plan 4**

After the campaign, laid down plans on follow-up of the new converts in order to keep them in the churches, are put forth. Some of the team members are engaged to do the follow-up work during the four weeks in which doctrines and prophecies are studied in details to keep the converts and the youths of the churches. They are to visit them in their homes and accompany them to the various churches for their studies.

#### **Action Plan 5**

As soon as the campaign has come to an end and the follow-up has started, the new converts and the youths would be separated from the rest of the various churches to take them through the prophetic studies and other doctrines that are needful to stabilize them in the church. During these studies, new converts and the youths are allowed to ask any question concerning prophecies and even doctrines they have problems with. Pastors and Elders, who are very knowledgeable in prophetic studies and doctrinal issues would be invited to teach them.

#### **Action Plan 6**

After the four weeks follow-up programme, plans are put in place to form a committee that will look to the creation of a prophetic school to help build the faith of the youths and new converts and also entrench them in the Adventism.

#### **Intensifying Sunday Bible Studies in the Selected Churches**

After the programme design, all the selected churches are to intensify Sunday Bible studies to equip the new converts and the youths to be strong in the church. Churches are allowed to plan programmes that would be used every Sunday with good facilitators who have control in the studies of prophecies and other doctrines so as to

bring to the understanding of the new converts and the youths the doctrines of the bible. Through these they can be ushered into the big church.

### **Organizing Sunday Morning Studies in Biblical Prophecies for the Youths and New Converts in the District**

Sunday Morning Prophetic Classes are organized in the district to help keep their memory and understanding on the prophecies in order for them, in turn to teach others when the needs arise. Pastors and Lay workers, who are conversant with prophetic teachings and linking them to the happenings of our world today, to come and teach these classes. Prophetic books and softcopies on prophecies like Prophecy Unlimited and others would be made available for their usage. The Conference would be approached to build a library to that effect.

### **Implementation of the Programme**

After the programmes design, the action plans were implemented with all seriousness. Church members took the programme as their own and participated fully in all the action plans for a successful implementation.

Implementation of the action plans in phases.

Phase 1:

The friendship exercise by the selected churches went on smoothly and successfully in all the corresponding communities. Church members from the selected organized churches in the district went from house to house on three consecutive Sabbaths during the divine service period. They prayed with the people found in their homes and others even went further to ascertain some of their needs. Some of their contacts' names were written and kept after members had given their report for each Sabbath. As these visits were being paid to the communities, the pastors and the laities, who were going to be speakers for the programme were having intensive



workshop. The facilitators did well to equip the speakers with the prophetic lessons. After the lessons, one elder retorted “I have been refreshed and never will I lay these lessons aside again.” The pastors and the elders were happy that they had passed through these lessons. The contacts made in the selected communities were shared among church members to be prayed for till the whole programme comes to an end. Knowing the contacts each member had had paved way for the visitation to start.

#### Phase 2:

After the friendship evangelism, each church community was grouped into zones. Each church chose for themselves members from the departments, who visited the indigenes of the communities in their respective zones, followed by the singing groups. The New Tafo Church formed three zones with 40 pair of members in each zone, making 240 members in all. Aboabo Church also formed three zones with 30 pairs in each zone and the other churches chose visitation teams as seen in Table 4 above. These chosen members spoke to the people and informed them about the impending campaign coming on in two weeks’ time and prayed for them. In order to know the prospect to turn during the campaign, names of the prospect were written and kept safely. These were shared among the members to be prayed for. The members prayed for the prospects for God to bring repentance to their hearts. The district printed for the selected churches invitation cards and the churches used them to invite some dignitaries in the communities. The completion of the visitation ushered in the two weeks campaign.

#### Phase 3:

The two weeks campaign started in all the selected on the same time. Six speakers began the lectures with another six supporting speakers in anything happens.

The speakers presented the messages to the admiration of all the members. The programme for the campaign as seen above was followed judiciously so as to make time for the prospects at the end of each night. Singing groups were called from the district to come and help in the song service throughout all the selected churches. Question set from the previous presentation were used to check whether what the prospects studied had been understood. Those who got all the answers correct were given gifts of different kind. The invited health personnel in the selected churches presented some of the current health issues in the communities and Ghana at large to them.

Throughout the campaign the prospects were glad with the presentations to the point that, when they were called to take their stand for Christ, they did it with enthusiasm. Each night after the presentation, those who took decision for the Lord were called, together with those who had questions to ask, and those who need prayers. At the end of the two weeks' campaign, the new converts were led to the baptistery for a mass baptism. All the selected churches brought their new converts and were baptized. The baptisms made at the end of the campaign were: New Tafo – 40, Aboabo – 23, Asokore Mampong – 15, Tafo Nhyiaeso – 10, Asabi – 5, and Sepe Timpom – 8. And these were the new converts that the district added to its membership. The churches did follow-up on the new converts and the youths to keep them in the churches.

Phase 4:

After the campaign, the selected churches selected some of the team members for the follow-up work. The selected team members went to the homes of these new converts and brought them to church each night, for four weeks. The new converts and the youths were separated from the rest of the church to study the prophecies and other doctrines that were necessary for their establishment in the church.

Phase 5:

The speakers and the supporting laymen (elders) taught the new converts and the youths the prophecies in the bible and the ones they did not understand well during the presentations in a separate class in each church within the same four weeks period that the follow-up was being done by the selected team members in each church. The new converts, the youths and even some old members who wanted to have a taste of studying the prophecies once again. And the speakers took them through the studies gradually.

Phase 6:

Before the four weeks study came to end, a committee, formed to create a prophetic school for the youths and the new converts of the district, did their work well and a prophetic school had been established in the district, whereby pastors and elders, knowledgeable in prophecies came to teach and are still coming.

### **Evaluating the Programme**

Looking at the programme done throughout the six months, one can be enthused with the dedication that the selected churches, members, and speakers put in to the programme to make it a success.

What was seen in the selected churches were so marvelous though, it was not about studies in prophecies, but it was a kind of regeneration that came across board in

almost all the selected churches. Since Churches in our area do not normally go to visitations during the divine service, though new to them, many of them expressed their joy of taken part in the exercise of making friends with the communities around them and praying for them. And the number that participated in the friendship exercise was enormous, in that all the members who were waiting to be preached to, went out to make friends and pray for others. Because all the members in the selected churches at that opportune time took part in the friendship evangelism, the number of contacts made in the Sabbaths were high.

Compared to the other periods that friendship evangelism had been done after divine service around 3. 30p.m., the number of contacts made before divine service were huge in all the churches. Rating of the friendship evangelism, recorded almost all (97%) the membership there at particular time were involved, due to going out during the divine service time in all the selected churches. About 320 houses were visited with 4800 people met and prayed for in the New Tafo environs. In Asokore Mampong vicinity, 180 houses were visited and about 2400 people were contacted and prayed for.

Since members were selected for the visitation teams, in all the selected churches, the number going for the visitation in the homes of the contacts made reduced, but the almost all the contacts already noted were visited and invited to the programme in the communities. In the researcher's estimation almost half of the contacts made during the friendship period were visited and prepared for the campaigns in the various churches. The visitations were done splendidly that, visitors were able to find their to the campaign sites without much difficulty.

The two weeks campaign on Revelation also something that broke the camel's back, in that since the district distributed fliers and posters all around the communities,

with the dramatic topics above in action plan 3, people from all walks of life in the communities were coming there to listen to these sensational topics. The speakers also did their best in the presentations and got ample time for the visitors to ask their questions at the end of each night's presentation. After the campaigns, the new converts were baptized and an induction ceremony was conducted for them to introduce them to their churches. And they were told to come each night for a prophetic study. To which they did.

The follow-up after the campaign was also done extraordinarily, in that, some of the visitation team members were selected again as a nucleus to visit those that had been baptized and bring them evening programmes which they did with all joy. At the end of the four weeks studies on prophecies, 93% of the new converts were still in the selected churches.

Rating the total performance of the whole district can be scored as very good, in that about 78% of church members were averagely present at each site almost every night. Table 14 below summaries the whole programme:

*Table 14. Achievement of the Whole Programme*

Church	Homes visited	No. of people met	Av. No. of Attendees	Baptisms	After Nurturing
New Tafo	320	4800	160	40	36
Aboabo	270	3900	120	23	20
Asokore Mampong	80	2400	80	15	14
Tafo Nhyiaeso	180	2800	90	10	10
Asabi	90	1500	40	5	5
Sepe Timpom	135	1800	60	8	8

After the whole programme, 101 people were joined to the district, looking at table 14 above, only eight converts left after the nurturing of new converts and the youths through prophetic studies was used in Sunday classes and the prophetic school

that were established for them. In all, the whole programme was a success with about 93% remaining steadfastly in the church.

Comparing this programme to previous campaigns done by the district and how the converts had been assimilated in to the district or not, had recorded these in 2010-2011:

*Table 15. District Performance in a major campaign in 2010*

Church	Homes Visited	No. of people met	Av. No. of Attendees	Baptisms	After Nurturing
New Tafo	80	1000	40	25	18
Aboabo	60	560	32	17	13
Asokore Mampong	50	440	36	14	9
Tafo Nhyiaeso	50	500	35	12	7
Sepe Timpom	40	380	30	8	4

*Table 16. District Performance in a major campaign in 2011*

Church	Homes Visited	No. of people met	Av. No. of Attendees	Baptisms	After Nurturing
New Tafo	140	1200	70	30	20
Aboabo	100	1200	80	15	9
Asokore Mampong	80	800	65	12	8
Tafo Nhyiaeso	100	628	57	14	10
Sepe Timpom	80	580	56	10	7

The fallout from the district's major campaigns done in the 2010 and 2011 as compared to the one done in 2012, which we had just discussed in this project, is as follows: the baptisms made during the major campaign in the year 2010 was 76, but at the end of the year, it was seen that 51 of those baptized during the campaign had remained in the district, making the percentage of 67.1. The 2011 major campaign outcome was that, 81 new converts were added to the district, however, at the end of

the year, only 54 of the new converts endured in the district, making a percentage of 66.7.

Comparing table 14 (2012) to tables 15 (2010) and 16 (2011), it was deduced from the tables that in the 2012 campaign, 93 new converts remained in the district, representing 93% whereas in the 2010 and 2011, 51 and 54 remained representing 67.1% and 66.7% respectively.

Finally this analysis has shown that, if more time would be allotted for the new converts and the youths, and be separated and taken through the prophetic studies and other studies of the church thoroughly, the keeping of new converts firmly in the church as a whole would be enormous, as it was seen in this project that, the new converts brought to the district in 2012 was higher than the previous two years.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter deals with the summary of the whole programme in general, conclusions made from the research work especially, in the case of the program design and some recommendations necessary for all who will come into contact with this research work.

#### **Summary**

In summary, using prophetic studies to stabilize new converts and the youths in the church has not been embraced dearly in the church, but if leaders of every Adventist church, will think about it and make it endearing to them, many converts and secret lovers of the church will be brought and established in the church. Prophetic studies was the tool that the patriarchs used to make their children eager to get closer to God. Though not precisely, written systematically for their children, they put the joy of knowing and trusting God and His promises in to the minds of their successors and in their children in general. The people in the pre-exilic era also did not relinquish the knowledge of God and His promises in the ground, but continued nurturing as their forefathers did, to keep the touch of knowing and trusting God and His promises burning. They kept to the standards, given to them by God and taught their children to do same. Daniel and his three friends got these deep at the bottom of their minds and can classified as students of prophecy, concerning what Jeremiah had prophesied about the captivity of Israel (Jer 29:10).



In the New Testament era, the Jewish nation also kept the prophecies, promises and the knowledge of God to their chest, nurturing their children in the rabbinic schools. Throughout the Gospels, and the Apostolic era, nurturing of new converts through apostolic doctrines and prophetic studies had been the tools in bringing new converts to the knowledge of God, as Warren W. Wiersbe puts it that, “the 3,000 new converts needed instruction in the Word and fellowship with God's people if they were to grow and become effective witnesses. The early church did more than make converts; they also made disciples.”<sup>17</sup>

Nurturing in the Adventist Church through prophetic studies, though not mentioned vividly in the inspired writings, has been highly recommended and tested in many ways, and have proven to be reliable for affirming new converts and the youths in the church. “This method was in use years ago” as one elder retorted, after going through with the new converts of his church, and went on to say further that, “it had been the method of establishing and stabilizing new converts, the youths and churches in the faith, but nowadays, it has almost been stopped.” The school that was established is also yielding a lot, since many of the new converts and the youths are gaining from it. In all, the converts got from this six months programme is a proof that, it is worth studying prophecies.

### **Conclusion**

To conclude, nurturing of new converts and the youths through prophetic studies is one of the best ways of sustaining them in to the church. If leaders are adding this method of studying through prophecies in to the nurturing of new converts and the

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<sup>17</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*. 1989 Chariot Victor Publishing and imprint of Cook Communication Ministries.

youths, most of the converts, the youths and even old members will be rooted in the church.

### **Recommendations**

1. Churches should look for facilitators who know the prophetic studies at will, and can train others to know and own it for themselves
2. Churches should have libraries where prophetic books and other doctrinal books and magazines will be kept for new converts, youths and the members at large.
3. Churches should spend more time on nurturing of new converts and youths of the church.
4. Churches should do well to include prophetic studies in their Sunday Bible Studies

APPENDIX A

LETTER

24/04/ 12

The District Pastor  
New Tafo District of Seventh-day Adventists  
Kumasi

Dear Pastor,

**REQUEST TO HAVE MY RESEARCH WORK IN YOUR DISTRICT**

I, Pastor Akwasi Boateng, is a student of the Adventist University of Africa, Kenya, but in the campus of Babcock University in Nigeria. I would like to come to your District and have my research work (Programme Design) there.

Hoping you would agree to allow me to have this project in your district.

Thank you.

Yours in His Service

Pr. Akwasi Boateng

Xc: Officers, SCGC

District Secretary, New Tafo District

Personal Ministries Director, SCGC

APPENDIX B  
AN INVITATION

24/04/2012

..... (Name of Pastor)

The South Central Ghana Conference

P. O. Box RY 336

Kumasi

Dear Pastor,

**INVITATION TO BE A SPEAKER IN A 2-WEEKS CAMPAIGN**

On behalf of the New Tafo District of Seventh-day Adventists and myself (the researcher), I write to invite you to be a **speaker** in the on-coming 2-weeks campaign on Revelation in the district.

Hoping you would cordially avail yourself for the Lord's work.

Thank you.

Yours in His Service

Pr. Akwasi Boateng

Xc: Officers, SCGC

District Pastor, New Tafo District

District Secretary, New Tafo District

Personal Ministries Director, SCGC

Ministerial Secretary, SCGC.

## APPENDIX C

### AN INTERVIEW

Nsiah, Paul Jnr. An interviewee at Seventh-day Adventist Church, New Tafo.

“It was a period when satellites campaigns went on in all towns and six churches were established in three weeks.”

APPENDIX D  
QUESTIONNAIRE

This exercise is entirely for academic purposes, to seek information for a research, in which your frankness in answering the questionnaire is very necessary, and can contribute immensely to the success of the research. You are assured that any information given will be used for academic purposes and would be kept confidential. You are required not to write your name on this questionnaire.

**PART 1: DEMOGRAPHY**

**Please tick the correct box**

1. What position do you hold in the church?

a) pastor  b) elder  c) departmental leader  d)

member

2. What is your level of education?

a) No formal education  b) Primary education  c)

Secondary

d) College education  e) Tertiary education  f)

Professional

3. Gender a) Male  b) Female

4. Age a) Below 19  b) 20 – 29  c) 30 –

39

d) 40 – 49  f) 50 – 59  g) 60+

5. Marital Status a) Married  b) Single

6. Number of years spent in the Church

- a) From Birth  b) 0 – 9  c) 10 – 19  d) 20 – 29   
 d) 30 – 39  e) 40 – 49  f) 50 – 59  g) 60 +

7. Are you baptized member of the Church? Yes  No

**MODE OF ENTRANCE**

1. What influenced you to join the Adventist Church?

Teachings/Doctrines  Music  Marriage

Perceived love bond/Fellowship among members

Relationship with friends/Family members

2. Were you adequately instructed in the Word of God before baptism?

Very much  Moderately  Not so much

3. How did you become a church member?

a) Baptism  b) transfer  c) profession of faith

**PERCEPTION ABOUT NURTURING**

**Please tick the correct box**

1. Have you any knowledge about nurturing of new believers?

Very well  Moderately  Not so much

2. When do you think nurturing of new believers should take place?

Always  Not always  Sometimes

3. What is the appropriate time for nurturing new believers in the church?

Immediately after baptism  Later after baptism  No

knowledge

4. How long should nurture of new believers take place?

Two Months  Three Months

Four Months  Always

**BIBLE STUDIES IN THE CHURCH**

1. What tool do you think would help to nurture new believers firmly in the church?

Biblical Doctrines  Biblical Prophecies  Devotionals

Sermons

2. If biblical prophecies, is it all the prophecies in the Bible? Yes  No

3. Which topics of the Bible normally excite you most?

Prophecies  Stories  Doctrines

### **TYPES OF PROPHECIES**

1. What types of prophecies would you appreciate when studied in the church?

a) Eschatological (end time events)  b) Historical

c) Conditional  d) Predictive

2. Which of these types of prophecies do you want to be taught in the church?

a) Historical  b) Eschatology  c) Predictive  d) Conditional

3. Do you become happy when prophecies are taught in church?

Yes  No  Sometimes

4. When prophecies are taught, do they uplift you spiritually?

Always  Sometimes  Not at all

5. Has the study of prophecies helped to establish you in the faith?

Yes  No  Not really

### **ESTABLISHING PROPHETIC SCHOOLS**

1. Do you think establishing prophetic school in the church is one of the best means of nurturing new converts?

Yes  No  Not really

2. Do you agree that studies in prophecies help stabilize the youth and new converts in the faith?

Strongly agree  moderately agree  strongly disagree

3. Do you find the church's interpretation of prophecies too difficult to understand?

Yes  No  sometimes

4. Do you agree to all interpretations done by the church in prophetic studies?

Strongly Agree  moderately agree  Strongly Disagree

### **INVOLVING PROPHECIES IN DIVINE SERVICE**

1. Would you be happy if studies of prophecies would become part of the divine service every Sabbath?



Very much happy  Moderately happy  Not so much happy

2. What do you think the study of prophecies bring to the church?

Very much  Moderately  Not so much

3. Is studying prophecies alone too difficult or rigid?

Very difficult  moderately difficult  Not so difficult

4. Will you be happy if you are called to come and teach prophetic lessons?

Very happy  Quite happy  Not so happy

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## VITA

### **Pr. Akwasi Boateng**

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Nationality: Ghanaian

### **Personal Statement**

I am looking forward to acquiring a lot of managerial skills and training which can make me one of the best Christian Leaders ever to lead God's business. To have opportunity to develop my intellect emotionally so as to work with all kinds of people. I have acquired already a Master in Public Health, with specialty in Health Services, Planning and Management. I am a Master of Art postgraduate with Pastoral Theology. My main strengths are adaptability, dependability, reservation and determination to get a job done. Sometimes I can make few mistakes but can also learn fast, never to continue in the same mistakes.

### **Education and Qualifications**

#### **Adventist University of Africa, Kenya 2010 – 2015**

Master of Art – Pastoral Theology.

#### **Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology 2007 – 2012.**

Master in Public Health – Health Services, Planning and Management.

#### **Adventist University of West Africa (Andrews University Campus) 1993 - 1996**

First Degree: Bachelor of Art – Theology

## **Work Experience**

2015 –President, Ashanti Central Ghana Conference

Executive Secretary, South Central Ghana Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church, Church Pastor (New Tafo SDA Church) 2008 – April, 2014.

District Pastor, Ashanti New Town 2004 – 2008

District Pastor, Santasi 2001 – 2003

Associate District Pastor and Chaplain of Adventist Preparatory and JSS 2001

District Pastor, Bodwesango 1997 - 2001

## **Activities and Interest**

Board Chair. Abenaa Kwabena Hospital 2015 to date

Board Chair. SDA Senior High School, Kenyasi 2015 to date

Board Member, Abenaa Kwabena Hospital 2008 – 2014

Board Member, SDA Hospital, Obuasi 2009 – 2014

Board Member, SDA Hospital, Dominase 2008 – 2014

Board Member, Akomaa Memorial Hospital, 2008 – 2014

Board Member, Adventist Pharmacy Board, 2015 to date

Board Member, Ghana Adventist Services 2015 to date

Executive Committee Member, Northern Ghana Union Mission 2014 to date

Board Member, SDA Senior High School, Kenyasi 2008 - 2014

Compete in many sporting activities, especially soccer for all school periods

## **Additional Information**

Computing skills, good knowledge of the basic programming, MS windows 8.1, Word, Excel, PowerPoint etc.

## **Personal Data**

Date of Birth: 24/06/1966

Place of Birth: Kumasi

Language Skills: English and Akan

Marital Status: Married

Hometown: Heman in Ashanti Region